



HONEYMOONING
IN RUSSIA

RUTH KEDZIE WOOD



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HONEYMOONING IN RUSSIA



AN IDYL OF LITTLE RUSSIA

HONEYMOONING IN RUSSIA

BY
RUTH KEDZIE WOOD

With Numerous Illustrations



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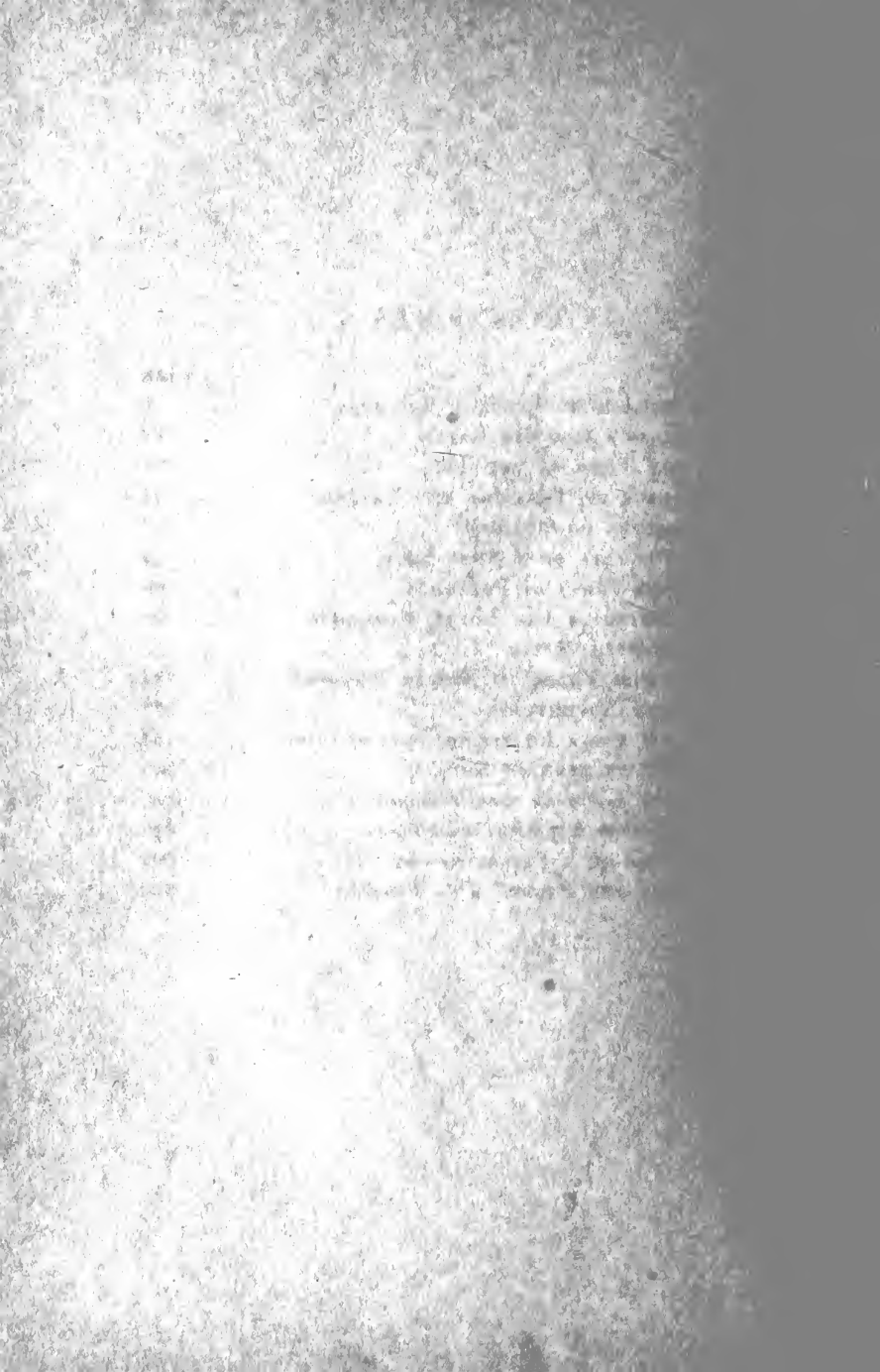
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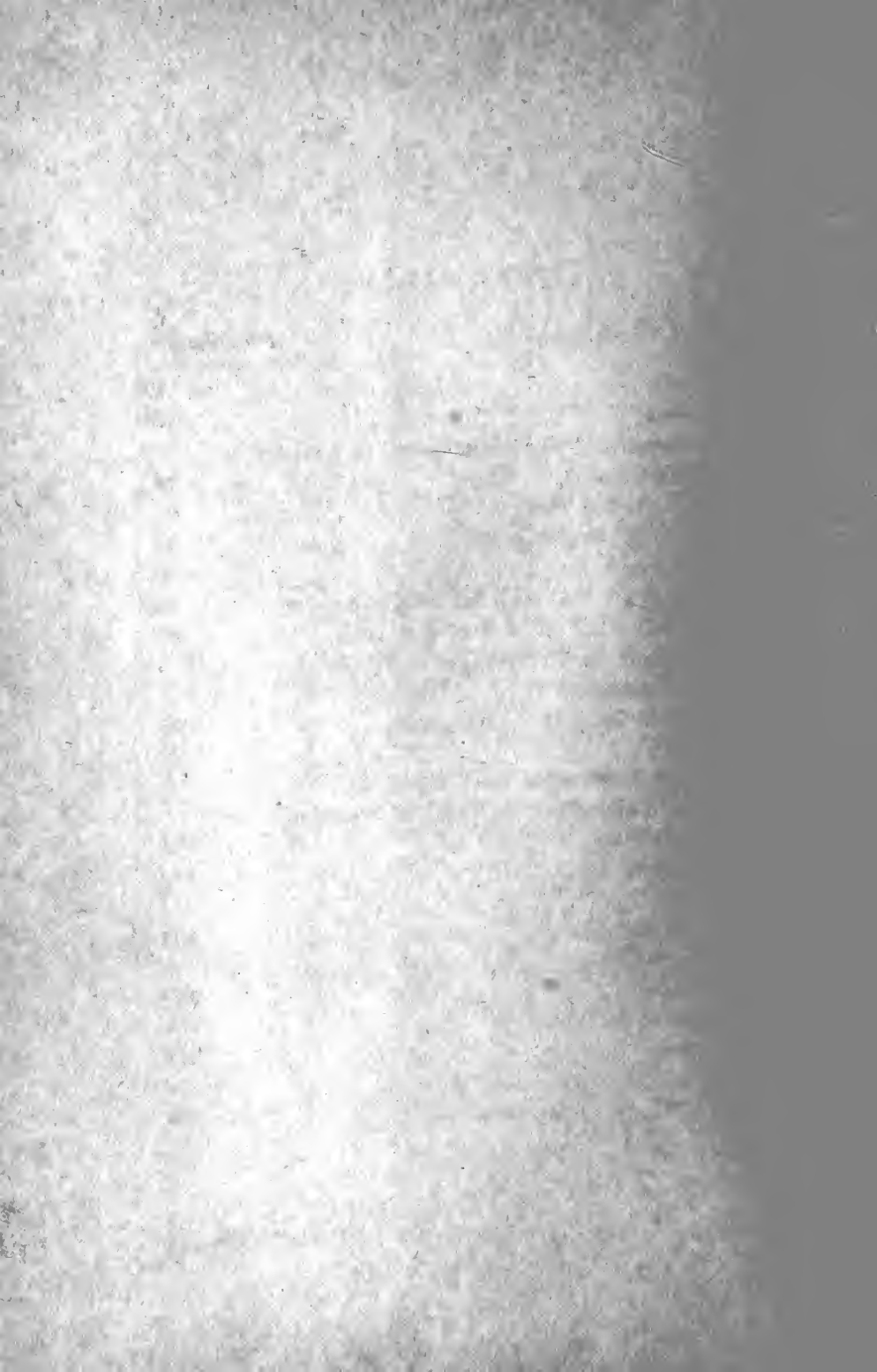
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To
Philip



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Chapter I

AN IMPROMPTU WEDDING JOURNEY

ONE day in June the library telephone summoned me.

"Please pin on your hat and come down quick in a taxi," pleaded Philip. "I have a package of news to deliver. Will you meet me at twelve? I am ordering luncheon for two at Carlin's."

Of course I promised and ran upstairs to put on something white and crisp. Of course, also, I prinked a moment. Two more moments sped in gathering up gloves and sunshade and in leaving word for the mater. As my tardy cab approached Carlin's familiar glass portals I saw Philip glance at his time-piece. He held it up for me to see, but I was too wary to be thus convicted of feminine dilatoriness.

"The news, the news," I cried. "Scold me afterwards!" I could see by his face it was something I couldn't wait to know; but we were tucked into our favourite corner and Gustav, the Sleek, had gone for our order of crab-meat canapé and potatoes O'Brien before my curiosity was satisfied. "Well?" I urged impatiently. Philip leaned towards me on his folded arms. His eyes shone with happy excitement.

"You are going to be married to-day. That is half my news."

"No?" I scoffed. "And to whom?"

"To me," brazenly.

I tilted my chin, though my heart thumped. "May I have the details?"

"You may, my dear, for they comprise the other half of my news." His eyes brimmed with a look familiar enough of late. "And when I am done, please be a little kind." When he used that tone he was hard to resist.

"I can't guarantee my mood. Begin."

"Then be it known that I have just been appointed to the post of European manager of the Consolidated Steel and Wire, and that I do not propose to undertake my new duties alone. This is your pre-nuptial repast, my very dear. At dinner you may invite your family to meet Mr. and Mrs. Philip D. Houghton, who sail in the morning for Liverpool."

"So you have turned pirate?" I parried. "Your methods are at least *début de siècle*. You lure by telephone and bait with crab-meat canapé." Phil's now serious eyes quelled my frivolity. I was only pretending anyway. "Is it permitted the captured maiden to have a few more particulars?" I murmured, suddenly meek. The word "captured" seemed to encourage the dear bandit, and his face was happy again as he enlightened me. The corporation's manager abroad had cabled his resignation following a disagreement over certain business transactions. "In recognition of proven faithfulness and ability" Philip, late sales manager, had been advised of his promotion. . . . This afternoon we were to be married. . . . To-morrow we sailed! In vain I implored a few days' respite. There was a vital matter awaiting adjustment at the London office and the first express steamer would take us to England none too soon.

And so I agreed to end forever the sweet uncertainty

of the game we had played all winter. By telephone we summoned a few friends and a parent and sister apiece. A hastily procured licence, a short drive in a hansom, a few quiet words — and I had exchanged my own name for one far dearer.

The Consolidated's president motored down to the dock early the next morning to speed us on our voyage. Mr. Houghton's presence would be required at the London office only long enough to attend to one matter of business, he assured us. Under the rather unusual circumstances attending his departure it was the company's wish that their European manager should feel free to assume his duties at his convenience. The great man threw me a smile. I sent one back.

"He is an old dear, isn't he, Philip?"

"He is," assented my husband.

Farewells were said — some teary, some merry. A last wave of my handkerchief signalled those fluttering on the pier. Less than twenty-four hours after our betrothal we had set sail upon our honeymoon.

Two weeks later found us in London with the momentous business arranged and only the further plans for our wedding journey still unsettled. A desultory scanning of the *Telegraph's* shipping news suddenly decided us. "From London to St. Petersburg by the Kiel Canal" was the magic sentence productive of much future interest and pleasure. We went to Fenchurch Street to engage our stateroom. We attended to our passport at the United States Embassy on Victoria Street, and had it viséd at the Russian Consulate on Great Winchester Street. Only one passport was necessary for us both. All whom it might concern were adjured to "allow Philip

Houghton and wife to freely pass," and then followed a detailed description of said Philip's features, age, and stature . . . grey eyes . . . black hair . . . straight nose . . . smooth-shaven . . . thirty-three . . . five feet eleven inches.

We bought Baedeker's Russia in French, none being published in English. One or two cablegrams and a score of post-cards went to America with the announcement: "Sailing for Russia on honeymoon," which we congratulated ourselves sounded delightfully unique. Altogether, the excitement of doing the unusual added spice to the pleasurable preparation.

We sailed down the Thames on July second, sole passengers on the baby ship *Zara*, with a dear fat captain at the helm. (Phil says captains don't stand at the helm now-a-days, but the nauticality of the phrase appeals to me.) We crossed the North Sea and knocked at the gate of the Emperor William or Kiel Canal. German hands swung open the bars for our ingress, and German meadows drew away as we intruded upon their green peace.

At Kiel, Germany's Hampton Roads, monstrous grey battle-ships glowered from the harbour. We stayed on the bridge till midnight to see the sun's afterglow fade in the west as the moon came up the sky in the east. The last gleam of sun-gold fell behind a cloud at exactly eleven-ten.

We spent the following day in a ghostly mist. A light-house bell warned of the too-close shore and the captain ordered the ship out to the open. At Riga we learned that a collier had gone down near us that night with all hands. Such tales are told with tragic frequency in Baltic ports.

Five days out we saw Finland's gloomy heights marshalled at the entrance of the bay which is St. Petersburg's front door-yard. From an island on our right Krönstadt's guns leered from gaping port-holes.

Up the companionway bounded kodaking Philip, inspired by novel opportunities for picture-making. The captain signalled frantically, motioning him back. "My dear young man, you are in Russian waters now. Put that box away until the police of Petersburg give you permission to bring it out again."

The captain had been running to Russian ports for thirty years and we did not delay in taking his advice, though we opined that a jaunt through Russia might have its drawbacks.

Off Kronstadt the *Zara's* anchor rattled down and we, a little awed and slightly nervous, beheld a green and red line of officials ascend the gang-plank from a revenue cutter. Their dingy clothing belied the bravery of gilt trappings and silver badges. Pomp of official authority but scantily hid poorness of body and spirit.

The captain spoke some Russian unintelligibles to a bearded Slav, who glanced at us and nodded. We were just two Americans come to see Russia, no baggage to speak of, perfectly harmless — the captain had evidently explained. Our passport was demanded and presented; our baggage opened and searched; the ship's hold explored, and the hatches sealed. Then for an hour, about the long table in the dining salon, the Tsar's minions fumbled documents and mumbled reports. Philip began to fidget as, moment after moment, the men in bottle-green and scarlet discussed mysteriously in suppressed gutturals. The air was weighty with unasked questions.

Was something amiss with our passport? Had we neglected a vital visé, or aroused suspicion by act or comment?

The captain smoking on the bridge had an air of uncommunicativeness which chilled us.

"Philip," I gasped, as I drew him around a corner of the deck, "do you suppose they could deport us?"

"I don't know, but that isn't the worst they could do." We sat down in our steamer chairs and waited, "as if for a summons," Phil recounted later, with a laugh. We searched our memories for some incriminating, though innocent, act of ours which might be the cause of the conclave within.

A tall man in visored cap and wrinkly boots came to the door and looked out. Others appeared behind him. Philip's hand stole over to mine on the chair arm. The captain was signalled and descended. The steely-eyed procession crossed the deck. More Russian conversation followed. Suddenly, papers being exchanged, hands were raised in precise salute and the whole lot clattered off to the gangway, leaving an aroma of leather, called Russian, though often tanned in Leipzig.

The skipper smiled and beckoned to us. I am sure he noticed my half-scared face. Phil took off his cap and brushed his hair free of his forehead with a gesture of relief.

"Will you kindly tell us the object of this funereal performance, Captain Grant?"

"Willingly, if I could. This is the Land of Lots of Time. The Russian's nitchevó rivals the Spaniard's mañana."

“And there is no other explanation for this racking delay?”

“No, they go through the same farce every time we come to port. It is due partly to the Slavic love of form and official importance. That’s Peterhov there on the right, where the Tsarevitch was born. You must go out to see the fountains play.”

But somehow the keen edge of our holiday enjoyment had been dulled. Neither of us confessed it in so many words, but a faint dread of the Unknown had usurped excited anticipation of the Unusual. Philip was staring through his field-glasses. Suddenly he gripped my arm and thrust them toward me.

“There — to the left — those gorgeous domes! That must be Petersburg.” A bright blue something caught my eyes, a glare of gold and a flash of Oriental red. Towers and crosses, spires and turreted domes reflected the noon sun.

“It is Constantinople!” I ejaculated, “not St. Petersburg.” And this, my first impression, was later confirmed by the filigreed cornices, turquoise cupolas, and glittering lacy spires of the Orient which everywhere rose to Russian skies.

Orientalism had also impregnated the street-cleaning department, we remarked as the *Zara* moved towards the docks and we descended to the filth and unevenness of a cobblestoned roadway.

A dozen isvostchiks made a bid for our patronage. We chose the least decrepit vehicle in which to deposit ourselves and our luggage, and exercised our ship-learned Russian to direct the cabby to a hotel. As the drosky started forward, Philip poked me delightedly with his

elbow, with unnecessary vigour, however, as I had already discovered the cause of his glee.

Clucking Russian fashion to his small fast horse, guiding the backless little vehicle over jouncing stones, our Jehu loomed large before us. His back and hips measured the width of the seat, spreading in obese volume to the very side-rails. On his head sat a squat hat. His hair and beard flowed in plethoric abandon to his shoulders and chest. Never had we gazed on so ample a figure, nor upon one so ludicrous. At that moment another drosky lurched by. Upon the box, shouting to another galloping horse, sat the twin of the creature before us.

We scarcely saw the sights flying past, so intent were we thereafter upon the parade of our cabman's replicas. The hugeness of each one exceeded that of his predecessor, only to be surpassed by the next hirsute horseman. Meanwhile we grasped firmly whatever our hands touched for support, devoutly hoping for a somewhat safe arrival. A wheel grazed another whirling by. The small horse ran faster. A corner was safely manœuvred, then another. At last a syllable and a jerk of the reins brought our steed to a sedate standstill at the *porte cochère*. A *dvornik* in bright red trousers and brighter blue tunic came out to take our bags. Philip recompensed the shaggy driver over-well, with tea-money added. As the porter had gone ahead and announced our nationality as other than Russian, a frock-coated courier immediately appeared, greeting us as Americans and speaking English the moment he observed the cut of our coats and boots.

Our room on the *bel étage*, luxuriously furnished and pier-glassed, pleased us immediately. French windows opened upon a court where doves, symbols to the Russian



PAUL, THE FIRST

of the Holy Ghost, pecked at scattered grain. A stocky maiden brought brass jugs of hot water, and we made our toilet preparatory to a visit to the Chief of Police regarding our treasured camera. In the midst of our ablutions, a house-boy knocked and asked in German for our passport. Philip was loth to give up the precious document, but I had read my guide-book and knew what was required of us. Until our departure from the city the imposing parchment must remain with the police.

Another obese cabby piloted us to the door of Police Headquarters. A soldier, standing on duty at the entrance, led us to a room where an officer was writing at a long table. Rising at our approach, he bowed, heels clicking formally. In German and some French we made known our errand. Thereupon he called an orderly and directed him to escort us up a half flight of stairs to a larger apartment. Here we waited while officials passed and repassed, glancing curiously at the two foreigners with the kodak. A brass-studded door opened to permit the egress of a magnificent individual in a silver-embroidered military coat. We saw behind him a roomful of men whose manner breathed importance and secrecy. An officer closed the door and came towards us. Philip stood up and repeated his story. I wanted to laugh; it was all so serious, and we had come merely to ask permission to photograph ordinary street sights! Again we were conducted up a stairway and through a door. Explaining our mission to a subordinate, our guide in red-piped green, excused himself formally. Again we waited, to be addressed finally by one in civilian's clothes, slender, tall, brun, superb, who came from an inner room. Again we stumbled in French while Philip fingered the camera.

Ah, he understood. It was to make the pictures, yes? We were tourists perhaps? The French of Paris, the voice of Italy, the manner of the Russian autocrat! We answered in awkward phrase. Then our interrogator smiled, hesitated, and said in idiomatic English: "Possibly, Monsieur and Madame would find it more convenient to use their own language?" After that it went more easily. Our names were taken, our business inquired, our address given. Of course we expected to pay a ruble as fee and take our permit with us.

"In two days, Monsieur and Madame, if you will call in person you shall receive the document." He smiled ingratiatingly and held open the door. We made our good-byes and walked solemnly down the bare stairways.

At the main door, a shackled boy was struggling and crying hysterically, as two officers stoically dragged him forward. Stories of Russian police methods came back to me, as we stood aside to let the three pass, and heard a door close upon the tragedy.

Our cheery room seemed doubly bright after the glimpse of dreary walls and silent lips at Police Headquarters. I sat down on the edge of one of the silk-covered beds.

"What do you suppose they were doing with that poor boy? He looked more like a student than a criminal."

"Perhaps he was a student. Do you remember some of the tales Captain Grant told us? I thought my blood would never grow warm again. Remember that one of the bank clerk who was reported as having been seen to pick up a revolutionary pamphlet in the street? And how the police came at two o'clock in the morning and pounded on the house door until the man, who wasn't a revolutionist at all, had to go down and let them in?

They told him to put on his clothes and come, and he did, his wife and children crying all the time and begging the officers to let him stay till morning with them. The captain said three weeks later the man came into the bank and no one knew him; his face was like death; his voice cracked and old; his legs tottery. When, finally, he made them understand who he was, they asked him where he had been and what they had done to him. But he shook his head and closed his lips, and they knew he didn't dare tell them."

I got up and began to dress for dinner, while Phil went down to change some British gold into kopeks and rubles. When he came back he was laughing.

"Well, I've solved the problem of the fat cabmen."

"You have?"

"Yes, the son of Babel below (he meant the courier who spoke thirteen languages, including Dutch and Arabic) says it is good form for all coachmen in Russia to wear padded clothes. The richer the employer, the thicker the padding. What we marvelled at was not flesh, but cotton batting."

"Well, in that case I should choose to be a poor Russ when I drove out, so that I might occasionally see beyond the mountain range on the box."

We went down to dinner at seven. Vaguely we had imagined that we should subsist in Russia upon black bread, caviar, and tea à la Russe. Certainly we were not prepared for the rarely delicious dishes which succeeded each other throughout the seven or eight courses.

A soup containing whole soft-boiled plover's eggs, followed spiced and salted hors d'œuvres. Fresh sterlet came on with whipped sour cream. A roast of tenderest

veal was trundled to us on an English joint table. Golden apricots with alisander salad were served after young broiled tree partridges. Then as a single course, new peas stewed in mint appeared in individual silver dishes. I was helping myself, rather liberally, to a pasty of wild strawberries, when I felt impelled to meet the gaze of a white-haired man, who with a lady perfectly gowned, sat at a near-by table. His eyes were turned our way with embarrassing intentness. I glanced at my husband, but doing in Russia as Russians do, he was sipping amber chài from a thin glass and had observed nothing. Our French-speaking waiter offered me some oddly wrapped sweets, which I munched, reflectively. My lord chose in silence one of those delightful Russian cigarettes.

“How many miles are we from Carlin’s, Philip?”

“You are homesick!”

“Not with you here,” I equivocated. Outside, the twilight hovered still.

“Shall we drive awhile before we go to bed?”

“Let’s,” I assented.

Once more I caught a glance from steel-grey eyes as we immersed finger-tips in fragrant water. Suspicion of my own innocence gripped me as on the ship when we waited. I recalled the captain’s enigma of a smile when we had enthused over prospective Russian experiences.

“Oh, there’s lots to see, but you’ll be glad enough to put foot across the frontier and breathe again!” I began to take a little stock in his prophecy. But why? And “why” it remained during several subsequent days in Mother Russia.



Chapter II

ST. IZAAK'S AND THE KAZAN

THE river Neva, twisting through the capital, offers an excuse for several bridges, most of which are of wood and are taken down in winter to be set up again in the spring. Little use for bridges when the Neva makes of itself a white highway for trams, sledges and pedestrians! On its banks are Government buildings, palaces and institutions, varying in interest from the Senate to the Foundling Asylum.

The squares, adorned with commemorative statuary, were gay with band music as we drove over the Alexander bridge to the Islands of the Neva delta. We drove in a maze of light green woods, wide-porticoed homes, and restaurant gardens to the Point where the boats of the Yacht Club lifted gently on the rising tide.

Returning along the arched allée of this aristocratic summer quarter we drew from imagination a probable winter scene among these merry islands. We heard crisp crunching of snow, quick trot of long-maned horses, light tinkling of troïka bells, lilt of blithe voices. The cool air of summer twilight acquired for us the twinge of winter cold, and we conceived pelts of fox and sable shielding soft bodies. Eyes, glistening, answered other eyes; life throbbed and cheeks grew scarlet-tinged as the St. Petersburg of Snowtime flashed by.

"What hour of night do you suppose it is?" I held up my blue watch.

“Ten o’clock! I can’t believe it.”

“I call it delightfully accommodating of Old Sol, this generous extension of sight-seeing hours, don’t you?” Emboldened by Russian example, a tweed arm slipped from the back of the low seat to my waist. So we had seen dozens of grey-overcoated officers speeding through the dusk with the maidens of their summer choice. However, I made a stand for the proprieties as we left the woodsy drives and crossed the river to the city streets. At the statue of Great Peter, which many think the finest of all equestrian bronzes, we almost ran down a ragged specimen, very drunk and singing joyously, doubtless in praise of the former contents of the bottle which he waved aloft.

“Just a patriot assisting his Government to build a new battle-ship or buy rations for the army,” remarked Philip, recalling the captain’s statement that the Government supported its defenders almost entirely from the proceeds of its vodka monopoly.

Doves courting brazenly on the window-sill awakened us at three o’clock: doves and glints of sapphire dawn. At four, breakfast sounds began to climb from the court. Someone was whistling—probably the air of a folk-song, I dreamily surmised. So interesting . . . native music always characteristic of national temperament . . . once read that most Russian tunes were minor. . . . A syncopated measure shrilled gaily from below. I sat up. Phil opened his eyes. “Do you hear what that fellow is whistling!” we exclaimed simultaneously, and then laughed aloud as we recognised the too-long familiar tune. Someone was fluting entreaties to one

William Bailey to return with expedition to his former habitation.

I slipped from my bed to the casement and, peering down through the half-light, got a glimpse of the destroyer of sleep and illusions.

It was Piòtr shelling peas at the scullery door.

Blue mists of daybreak faded to grey, and, in the pallid light, St. Izaak's gold dome shone gently luminous. As the sky grew saffron and rose, chiming cathedral bells melodised the cool air. Over the half-sleeping city breathed the Young Day. And it was the Sabbath! I asked Phil if he remembered, but got no response. Morpheus reigned again. Noiselessly I dressed, and left on the pillow a note: "I am gone, Lazy One, to say a prayer for you and me in the Cathedral of Gorgeousness near by. I shall return séichas."

It was barely six as I merged into the stream flowing towards the great church. The portals, sentinelled by mammoth pillars of Finland granite, received the early worshippers as bells rang from the quartet of towers overhead. Within the edifice many hundreds were already at their devotions, making ground reverences, touching their heads to the stone floor after the manner of the devout Russian. Shafts of malachite and lapis lazuli separated aisle from aisle and guarded the chancel steps. On swinging doors leading into saints' chapels and ante-rooms were religious paintings framed in silver. A thousand tremulous tapers glimmered from silver candelabra, man-high. Before ikons blazing with brilliants and precious metals, more candles burned, some great, some small. From one hand to another these candles

were passed through the dense crowd, with a whispered name of a saint and a request to place it before the proper ikon. Many times the original petitioner was lost in the kneeling, praying, crossing throng at the rear. The merchandising of candles at Russian shrine doors is a not inconsiderable source of revenue to the Greek Orthodox Church. It is a regrettable commentary upon the teachings of the church that many worshippers offer a candle and a prayer for assistance to an end of questionable righteousness. A thief or a tyrant seeks saintly intercession for the furtherance of his aims with a faith equal to that of a child or a madonna.

As I stood by a pillar watching faces and attitudes, a man entered whose evening clothes showed under his overcoat. He purchased a good-sized taper and, crossing himself, gave it to the one just ahead, who passed it on its way. Perhaps, I thought, he has been playing all night and has come to ask heavenly aid in winning back at the cards he will play all day. He had been drinking; his face was streaked with dissipation, but he went through the litany none the less devoutly, sparing no genuflection nor sign of the cross. Near him a workman prayed upon his knees, bending repeatedly to touch his head to the floor and muttering over and over one resonant phrase. White-uniformed soldiers, hairy *isvostchiks*, maids in high-crowned caps with heel-length ribbons rubbed elbows with shopkeepers and housewives. A choir of boys and men began to intone in voices liquid and vibrant. The people and deacons chorused antiphonally in stately chant. Through the Royal Doors in the centre of the ikonostas, or screen separating chancel from sanctuary, the celebrant was seen, moving amid a haze of in-



PETER, THE GREAT

cense. A white priest, with long soft-curling hair, passed among the congregation swinging his censer before the holy pictures. His robes were embroidered with verses in Old Slavonic, the language of the church, and outlined with gems. Priests, choir, deacons chanted in turn the prayers, epistles and psalms of the Sunday service. A wave of tonal glory surged to the crest of the dome where a symbolic dove swayed from a cord.

My æsthetic ego exulted in the beauty of the ritual and the splendour of the setting. . . . The priests vigorously chanted the benediction. . . . The music ceased. . . . The multitude arose, turned in one great mass to the doors, and passed through them to the sunny street. No religious exaltation illumined their countenances. . . . Stolid and apparently unmoved, they had risen from their knees.

Through an alley of begging hands I went down the cathedral steps. My husband awaited me at the door of the hotel. It was just quarter past seven.

"Either your sense of time or knowledge of Russian is at fault, Mrs. Houghton. Séichas is the term you employed: 'I shall return séichas.' I looked it up right away in that List of Familiar Words and Phrases that boat fellow wrote out for us. Is this returning 'immediately'? I've been up for hours."

I ignored the exaggeration and led the way to the breakfast-room, suppressing my superior knowledge until we had ordered pots of caravan tea and brown rolls.

"I am surprised at your ignorance, Philip. Translated literally, séichas means 'within the hour,' and almost within the hour I return. In this Land of Never Hurry they synonymise the two terms 'immediately' and

‘within the hour.’ Deliciously characteristic, it appears to me.”

“Did you keep your other promise?”

“Which?”

“The one about praying.”

“Praying?” I echoed. Throughout that gorgeous ceremonial, how utterly I had forgotten to pray!

We spent the long day hopping in and out of a drosky, visiting superb half-pagan temples, and marveling at their eastern splendour. We were wandering through the Cathedral of Our Lady of Kazan, a feeble though far from ineffective copy of St. Peter’s at Rome, when a young monk in a black wool robe approached us.

“If it is permitted, the pleasure would be mine to show the cathedral treasures to Monsieur and Madame.” His manner was winningly childlike, and he was so evidently eager to do us a courtesy that we quickly accepted his offer and followed him to an alcove chapel, puzzled that he should address us in our own tongue.

In the chapel, a railing of solid silver defended the altar. The golden garments of a life-sized image of the Virgin and Child were thickly overlaid with seed pearls. Protected by glass, an ikon of the Holy Mother was mounted on a low pedestal, and heaped with rings, brooches and pendants set with diamonds, pearls, rubies, emeralds and sapphires. These were offerings made by devotees on church days sacred to the Christ Mother, explained the soft-voiced guide.

“This Christ ikon has a story — one for which every true-hearted Russian blushes.” And he began to tell us the story in his quaintly accented English, hesitating oc-

casionally for an elusive word, or appealing to us shyly when his memory failed him.

A young prince who in other days had lived profligately forsook his ways and appeared every day at this shrine to kneel for long hours, kissing the jewel encrusted ikon of the Saviour. The devout mother of him gave thanks to God and the saints for the reclamation of her son's soul. For days his zeal did not abate. One evening, a verger, coming softly to place fresh flowers on the altar, found the prince kneeling at the foot of this ikon. He bent nearer to observe more closely his behaviour. Suddenly, a candle flaring, he saw what he was doing and understood why he had for weeks continued to pray with so great ardour. With his teeth, the prince had been loosening little by little a rare sapphire in the golden draperies of the holy picture. Even as the verger looked, the stone rolled from its setting into the mouth of the thief. When he rose to go to his waiting troika, the verger had already called a gendarme standing in the cathedral porch, who arrested the perfidious one and took him, protesting, to Police Headquarters. In the office of the Chief, the jewel was found in his mouth, where he had thought it safely hidden."

"And then?" we chorused, as the brother finished his uncanny story.

"They cast him into the Fortress of Schlüsselburgh, Monsieur and Madame. There may he languish forever in penance for his blasphemy!" He crossed himself, and his lips moved, doubtless in prayer to be himself delivered from temptation in time of trial.

"I may take Monsieur to the robing-room, if Madame will permit us to withdraw," he hesitated. I gave prompt

consent and they passed out to a room where, to quote a discourteous Russian phrase, "neither women nor dogs might enter." Standing by the silver chancel rail, I watched the multitude come and go. A quiet figure in mourning clothes came to pray and leave fresh candles in the tallow-dripped sconces on the altar. A cuirassier swaggered by in a yellow-trimmed white coat worn over dark green trousers. He knelt on the tiled floor of the immense church to pray, open-eyed. Andréi, come from the country in tulúp and red sash, with blue baggy trousers tucked into tall boots, walked with his hand in Katiúsha's. She was dressed in a Sunday cap of stiffly laundered linen and a short embroidered skirt and jacket. Her features were broad and plain, but comely with the consciousness of love. They wandered from ikon to ikon, making the sign of the cross with the thumb and first two fingers, the third and fourth being drawn into the palm.

Middle-class mothers in thick commonplace gowns piloted proper little Vasilis and Domnás through the crowd assembling for vespers.

A fat officer from the Baltic provinces moved ponderously toward the door, his features too Teutonically inclined to admit of a mistaken guess as to his forebears. In the porch he joined a pretty Russian demoiselle, and they went off together, his grey overcoat striking against his shiny heels. The evening service had begun before My Dear returned with his monk. In his eyes I saw the reflection of the glittering treasures he had seen. I smiled at his enthusiasm.

"There were vestments literally hemmed with gems, the kind Rajahs wear to the photographer's," he eluci-

dated. "And chalice cups of hand-worked silver, and mitres of fur and enamel *steep* with jewels, and staffs, and censers, spears and spoons, patens, penagias and pectoral crosses, heavy with gold and diamonds. A 'white priest' unlocked a case and showed me a Bible with gold covers thickly set with rubies — pigeon-bloods. . . . But I only half enjoyed it all," he flattered, "with you not there." He squeezed my hand under the very eyes of a painted saint on the wall. If it had been the presentment of a "pope" I should not have been so embarrassed, since, of that branch of the church, marriage is not only not forbidden, but required.

The Cathedral of Our Lady of Kazan is named for a holy picture of the Virgin which escaped miraculously a devastating fire in Kazan, and was brought to Petersburg. The ikon itself, framed in pearls and other gems valued at \$75,000, is set into the ikonastas, with the name of Jehovah in flaming stones above. The screen, or ikonastas itself, is of silver, made from the precious plunder carried away from Moscow by Napoleon's marauders. It was later recovered by avenging Cossacks and offered to Our Lady of Kazan. This church, the seat of the Metropolitan of St. Petersburg, is the new capital's thank-offering for the defeat of Napoleon. Here the Imperial Family come to give thanks for any special providence. Keys and banners of Turkish and Persian wars are hung upon the pillars. It is, next to St. Izaak's, the most magnificent church in Petersburg.

Under the pergola which half circles the plaza, we stopped to say good-bye to our guide. His modesty and kindness had won us both, though we had been taught not to think overwell of the typical Russian "blacks."

"Won't you tell us where you learned our language?" I ventured. "Here in Russia?"

"No, Sudarynya." Memory misted his placid eyes. "Not in Russia, but in New York, where for three years of happiness I was permitted to serve the Bishop, when the Orthodox church was on Second Avenue."

"Second Avenue!" The name was ludicrous with the Nevsky at our elbow.

"So you know America!" Philip exclaimed. "What did you find there to admire?" The black priest's eyes still held a shadow of Other Days.

"To admire, Monsieur? Ah, the things I remember best of America are not to admire alone, but to love, to love!" His voice was tenderly reminiscent. Then his eyes and voice awoke. He glanced quickly about the portico and leaned a little towards us, speaking with hushed earnestness.

"I found my people free to live, to learn; free from suspicion, superstition and slaughter; free to live less like beasts in their stalls, more as live other creatures of God. Ah, my poor people of Russia!" he breathed. "My gasping, struggling, bleeding Russia! What shall the end be? For what may we hope?"

A long-haired priest, hatless and white-robed, came along the almost deserted archway and looked curiously at us. The Brother started as if someone had called, and became again the unimpassioned soul of gentleness. I was near to tears. Philip put out his hands and, half timidly, the monk gave him his.

"I have said rash words perhaps, Monsieur. In this land one may not speak his soul. When I remember the

America for which I am always yearning, I forget the Law of Silence."

He stood under the portal looking quietly after us as we crossed the square to the teeming Nevsky. The same thought possessed us both. What were the bonds which held these people, if to this man of God the hordes of New York's east side seemed, in comparison, creatures of fortune and happiness!



Chapter III

AT THE TOMB OF THE TSARS

PHILIP, the resourceful, had invented a mode of communicating with the droskymen which worked admirably, and which I herewith recommend to subsequent sight-seers who are as unfamiliar with the speech of the country as were we. From dozens of post-cards illustrating Petersburg's attractions, we selected a goodly number with the advice of a genial shopkeeper. Before entering a drosky, we would display to Vanka certain cards and demonstrate our desire to be driven to the objects of interest thereon depicted. The interrogation, "Skolko?" (How much?) would result in perhaps three raised fingers, indicating a like number of rubles, or fifty-cent pieces. According to honoured custom, the tariff then would be discussed, and finally gesticulating that it was exorbitant, we, having learned our lesson from the courier, would show ourselves ready to receive the offers of the ever-present assemblage of rival horsemen. At this juncture Philip would proclaim with almost profane emphasis, "Ya belshoi needam!" a phrase of which he was very fond, though its meaning was innocent enough, "I will not give more."

Seeing the threatened possibility of losing a fare to a brother driver, our disputant would instantly pursue, imploring, "Isvolti, pajaluista'" (Come back, if you please), with an expression so effective that we rarely failed to be moved, and in the end we would usually embark flushed

with a victory of a finger and a half. I found the haggling always amusing. Not an *isvostchik* in Muscovy expects his original asking-price. He intends eventually to carry you for half or a third the sum which he asserts in the beginning to be preposterously cheap and immovably fixed. "Yay-ee-bó-goo!" (God is my witness!) he swears, "No man could do it for less." This with the air of one whose decision, attained only after just consideration, is unalterable. At first, the stolidity of his position almost convinces. Then you recall the strain of Orientalism in each true Russian, and the (expected) bargaining begins. Finally, you win, apparently. In reality, your cocher has agreed to drive you for the fare settled in his own mind when the question "Skolko?" was first propounded.

The tariff for a Petersburg public cab is thirty cents an hour. I feel justified in asserting that the horse of flesh will, in that hour, cover more ground than would an average iron horse of the Imperial Russian Railways in the same length of time. Vanka's horse is strong, swift and sure. He drives himself, nosing his way through complications of traffic confusing to a head less wise. His forebears were bred from Dutch and Arabian stock, his sponsor being Orlov, the count whose interest in redeeming the puny native breed has resulted in the production of the fastest and hardiest of all cab horses. Heedless that his "fare" is often paying "by time," though sometimes "by the course," unlearned in the otherwise universal ruse of restraining his steed accordingly, the Russian cabman spreads wide the worsted reins wrapped about his wrists, and shouts with vigour to the willing animal, which bounds over the cobblestones, and

tears around corners until the drosky's startled occupants poke the formidable back, and gesticulate, "Less speed, if mercy dwells within you!" This, in the case of foreigners. For the Russian, the faster the better. Aside from endangering our necks, our desire to lose nothing of the street sights was frustrated by these mad dashes along the Nevsky, or the Znamenskaia, or the Bolshaia Morskaia.

"We drove out to observe life, not to establish a record for cab horses," as Philip remonstrated. Following a generous prod in the back of his ample blue armyak, Johnny (English for the generic "Vanka") would screw half way around with a questioning stare. These foreigners were curious folk, but he would be indulgent if their wants were not too preposterous. Philip's pantomime of slow-walking fingers usually conveyed the idea. "Da, da," the good-natured fellow would affirm, and for a few minutes the gait would be less strenuous until the horse took things into his own hands again. During an hour's drive this pantomime would be repeated perhaps a dozen times. Then we discovered the word *tishé* (drive slowly) and substituted that for the sign language. But no matter what the method we employed, rarely did we drive slowly enough in Russia to suit our sight-seeing tastes.

The day was gloriously warm and sunny, and we were about to make a pilgrimage to the shrines of Peter the Great. We had lunched early, since we had breakfasted not at all. To the appetising *zakuska* of raw fish, smoked goose, and onion; to the iced soup; the broiled grouse and salty cucumbers, we had done flattering justice. Nor had we slighted the fresh mushrooms and



CATHEDRAL ERECTED IN ST. PETERSBURGH IN
MEMORY OF ALEXANDER II



the pineapple morojennyé. Over glasses of lampopo we had planned the excursion to scenes associated with the life and death of the Enterprising Tsar.

The curb was hemmed with a line of droskies, and Philip, hailing the head of the cab-rank, produced a post-card and stammered, "Petropaulovski Sobór"; but the inquiry "Skolko?" was scarcely put when the cabman addressed was signalled and beckoned away by a smart-looking individual in uniform who leaned indolently against a pillar of the porte cochère. The interference was so undoubtedly intentional that we stared at the intruder in astonished indignation. Ignoring us, however, the officer proceeded to his bargaining, and we were left to the second in line, a big Jehu with an eye too shrewd for an everyday isvostchik. He perceived our wishes with remarkable celerity, and we were on our way with fewer preliminaries than usual. Philip looked annoyed, and I slipped a hand within the bend of his elbow. "Nitchevó," I whispered. "Let's forget it." But I knew the crux of his vexation lay in the fact that ignorance of the Russian tongue had cheated him of satisfactorily expressing himself to the impudent officer in the showy uniform.

As I whispered, I saw an ear turn ever so slightly my way. But how could a shock-headed cabby understand any syllables spoken in a foreign tongue? We were quite silent as we drove up the Nevsky Prospekt. Blue, orange, terra cotta, and salmon-pink buildings stretched for three miles along the great avenue, which is 114 feet wide, almost equalling in breadth the main streets of Salt Lake City. Imposing banks and bazaars neighboured smaller establishments on either side of the street, which was filled with traders, promenaders, Slavs, and Tatars;

merchants and muzhiks; clerks and officers, civil or military, though all in uniform; messengers, maids and soldiers. In a general's carriage a black man well-accounted consorted jovially with his military brother. To us bred in the United States, it was an odd sight, but one not unfamiliar to frequenters of London or Paris or The Hague. The traffic, which was considerable even though it was the heart of summer, was capably handled by the politzia who were stationed at each crossing. They were invariably fine-figured men, immaculately groomed from the top of their smart caps to the toes of their tall shiny boots. More like field marshals than policemen, we thought them, especially when we espied the numerous medals pinned across the breasts of many.

Occasionally, a lady, come in from her summer estate for a day's shopping, would emerge from the lafka of a bowing merchant, followed by an attendant with bundles which were placed upon the luxurious seat of her kareta. Since the thickness of his padding exceeded that of the public cabmen, her Tatar coachman was called a kutscher, and drove his long-tailed horses with proportionate éclat. Up the avenue, black balls dropped into place upon a fire watch-tower, and the resulting clatter of carts and engine sent ordinary vehicles scurrying to the side of the road. With more expedition than we should have prophesied for a Russian Fire Department, the apparatus came swinging across the avenue and down towards the Neva, leaving the wake of excitement beloved of small boys the world over. The tall small boy at my side was for following immediately, but the peroulok, or side street, was already guarded. However, we saw the fire from the Troïtska bridge, and thought the blaze was scarcely worthy the

bustle. Firemen scrambled to the roof and shouted orders and reorders with no apparent decision as to the necessary course of procedure. The pompous chief seemed to be little regarded by his flustered assistants, and on the whole we thought it a fair example of Russian incompetence in time of stress. We caught a glimpse of penates being thrust upon the sidewalk, and of the owner's excited gesturing. But soon the neighbours began to move the furniture all back again; the lusty fire-fighters climbed to earth, and the comedy was done.

The Petropaulovski Krepost, or Fortress of Sts. Peter and Paul, is used as a state prison. As we drove along the river-bank, we conjectured as to which of the barred windows had been that of Peter the First's son, the murdered Alexis; which the Decembrists'; which Sophia Perovskaia's; which Stoessel's. Out of crumbling ports, cannon noses pointed down the river, the enemy of whose inundating approach they are now used to warn the marshy city.

Within the Peter-Paul Cathedral, the walls are overlaid with keys and banners of captured cities and regiments; and scores of silver wreaths commemorate those who fell in the service of a Peter, a Catherine, a Nicholas, or an Alexander. While our *isvostchik* waited, we made the rounds of the royal tombs and counted one for each *Gosúdar* since Alexis, except the Second Peter, who, smitten with smallpox in Moscow, died and was buried in the old capital. A gold wreath, a double eagle, and an ever-burning light distinguish the tomb marking the resting-place of each Emperor and his Empress, whose bodies lie beneath the cathedral floor. Near the chancel, a throne hung in embroidered crimson indicated the seat

of the imperial pair at services for the dead. Recently they had sat under the brilliant canopy at the funeral of a Grand Duke.

All we knew of those who had ruled and misruled Russia during the past two centuries came back to us as we stood within the Russian Pantheon. Here, beside the First Peter, lay the plain-faced but congenial Martha Savronskaia, former domestic in the house of a Lutheran minister of the Baltic provinces, whom Peter married when she was still the wife of a dragoon and his own wife was imprisoned in a convenient convent. Vice the former empress, he set her upon the throne beside him and called her Catherine the First. She did not oppose his ambitions and thereby proved herself more politic than the mother of Peter's son Alexis, and more so than Alexis himself, whose anti-western obstinacy cost him his life at the instigation of his father, who had no more conscience in this respect than had Ivan the Terrible.

Anne and Elizabeth inherited some of their uncle's and father's energetic qualities and all of his pernicious ones. Their irregular lives would have horrified a less immoral court. Elizabeth, who wanted the throne which rightly belonged to the infant Ivan VI, imprisoned him and his parents. He was a forgotten prisoner at Schlüsselburgh, taught to read by a warder, ill-fed and half an imbecile.

Peter III was so unfortunate as to have had for his wife Catherine the Monster, called Catherine the Great. She had ambitions also, and because of his scandalous habits she came to hate him and was happy in finding at her hand lovers who were not squeamish about staining their hands with blood. So Peter was strangled and

buried in the Alexander Monastery cemetery. Later, the Emperor Paul I, who was known as his son, ordered the body disinterred and laid in the Peter-Paul Cathedral.

Catherine was crowned Empress. She wrote plays, corresponded with Voltaire, instituted theatres and schools and patronised the arts. But she was not too busy to plan the murder of the inoffensive Ivan VI, whom her dead husband had been inclined to befriend, nor to interfere with the happy domestic life of her son Paul and his lovely wife, Natalia. By Peter III she had never had a child, but before his death she became the mother of Paul I, whose father was a courtier named Salytov. Catherine was a German duchess, Paul's father, a Russian commoner. There was not a drop of Romanov blood in his veins nor in those of Peter III, his pseudo-father. The Romanov dynasty ended with Peter the Great's grandson, the youth who died in Moscow.

Nicholas II is the great, great, great grandson of Catherine II and her lover. To claim Michael Romanov as an ancestor of the present Tsar is a perversion of genealogical facts. Paul initiated his reign with some good reforms, but certain erratic tendencies grew into madness. His subjects were often amused as well as terrorised.

"Did you ever read," said Philip as he traced the Slavonic characters which denoted Paul's tomb, "that funny story about the regiment which had displeased him? He commanded them to appear before him, and when he had reviewed them, he gave the order: 'March! — to Siberia!' And so they all started on the long trek. But before they had gone many versts a messenger from the repentant Emperor recalled them."

Paul was named "the Prohibitive," because he was so

insanely fond of forbidding. The court and the people finally lost all patience with his feeble-minded vagaries. Three midnight assassins made an end of him in his bed-chamber, where he made a hopeless struggle for his life. He had refused to sign away his right to the throne in favour of his conniving son, Alexander I.

Alexander's life was tainted with melancholy, possibly the fruit of remorse. He dreamed of great deeds but he accomplished little. Toward the end of his rule his crown grew very heavy. He spoke of making his brother Tsar in his place, so that he might dream unmolested. He was in a town some distance from Petersburg when his death was announced. There is a tomb in the Peter-Paul church marked with his name; but many believe that it is not he, the Emperor Alexander himself, who lies there. In far-off Tomsk the occasional visitor is shown the house and grave of a hermit, who came mysteriously to the Siberian town and who lived there unattended and unvisited until he died. When the young man who is now Tsar, made an eastern journey before he was crowned, he went out of his way to see the home and burial-place of Fomich. The supporters of the theory that the hermit was the wearied Tsar have an array of corroboration almost convincing.

"If it's true," said Philip, "his good sense was commendable. He accomplished nothing worth while as a Tsar. I should like to think that he was blessed by being permitted to spend his last years as a plain man."

His brother, Nicholas I, inaugurated his heartless reign with the barbarous massacre of the Decembrists in the Senate Square. About the camp-fires of the defending army during the war with Napoleon many sons of Russia



A CHAMBERLAIN TO THE TSAR



had discussed the vital topic of her ailments and possible cure. The organisation later known as the United Slavs grew out of these earnest discussions, and its membership included the noblest, worthiest names in the land. When the death of Alexander was announced and there was a delay in proclaiming the new Tsar, the opportunity seemed ripe for the revolt against absolutism, long planned and hoped for.

But the golden moment passed in inaction, indecision, incompetence. Before the bayonets and guns of Nicholas, whose imperial rights they had assembled to contest, the Decembrists were mowed down like grain. Those who escaped immediate death were exiled, or hanged, or tortured later. Forty-two went mad within the prison walls of the Peter-Paul fortress. Blood flowed for the next few years as it flowed during the rule of the Ivans and Peter the Great. Benkendorf established the Third Section, the Secret Police of Russia, who recognise no law, who may arrest, convict, condemn without proof and without trial.

There is good reason to believe that Nicholas, like his brother, wearied of his existence, and that he poisoned himself.

His son, the Second Alexander, released groaning Russia from many of the bonds with which Nicholas had weighted her. Perhaps out of motives of self-preservation, certainly with some notion of doing tardy justice to the twenty million slaves who had worn their chains since the days of Boris Goudonov, he became their emancipator. The war with England, France and Turkey in the Crimea had ended badly for Russia. Her debt was enormous. It was imperative that she borrow money. For-

eign nations, horrified at her treatment of the serfs, were disinclined to lend any financial aid until conditions were bettered. Therefore, some say, Alexander gave the serfs their freedom. It would be pleasanter to believe he did it because he was moved by human, natural motives, too rare in Russian imperial characters. At any rate he did safeguard their land provision. One hastens to record the smallest good deed of a Muscovy Tsar.

Because the conditions under which they were living, and under which many generations of their ancestors had lived, had finally grown to be insupportable, the youths of the land began to protest, frequently with bombs in their hands. Alexander's life was attempted seven times before the March day in 1881 (it was the thirteenth!) when Sophia Perovskaia let her handkerchief fall at the approach of the Emperor's carriage, with fatal results. As the Tsar fell in the snow, mutilated and bleeding, he spoke only a sentence, "Is the Tsarevitch unhurt?" Re-assured, he died uncomplaining.

During Alexander Third's life the spirit of revenge for wrongs, centuries old, continued to sweep the high places, and many great ones fell. Alexander, in hourly terror, hid himself behind a barrier of police and soldiers. But he could not live without eating, and in order to dine cooks were necessary. Travelling home from the south by royal train, the lunch hour arrived. Suddenly a pastry cook fell ill. There was no doctor aboard. The train was graciously stopped and the man was put off at a station where he could be treated. The engine had scarcely gotten under way, when a master specimen of cake-making blew up, and with it, very nearly, the Imperial Family. Inside the cake, a well-timed bomb had

been substituted for sugar and flour. The ailing cook was the maker. Though the Tsar was not killed, he never recovered from the experience, and his death a few years later was undoubtedly hastened by it.

From the time of Catherine II, three Tsars were murdered; one is said to have poisoned himself, and one died from the shock of attempted assassination. Of six Emperors, only one, Alexander I, may be said to have died a natural death. Not agreeable history for Nicholas II to contemplate.

Russia has lived its centuries in the shadow of a royal family tree whose diseased roots and blighted sap have borne their natural fruit.

"And the tree has not ceased bearing," added Phil as we made our way to the door.



Chapter IV

A PALACE OF TREASURE AND TRAGEDY

*T*O the little wooden church, near the fortress, which was consecrated by Peter the Great in 1710, it is the favourite custom of the Orthodox to repair to offer their petitions for a safe journey. To St. Izaak's they go for comfort; to the Kazan to ask a blessing upon business undertakings; to the Preobrajensky to pray for the sick; to the Peter-Paul Sobór to be joined in matrimony. As we entered the insignificant frame building, called Peter's church, we thought it had been most appropriately chosen as the shrine of travellers, for where in Russian chronicles will one find a more inveterate wanderer than Peter himself? To Holland, to England, to France and to Germany, to Archangel, to the Crimea, and back to Petersburg — his journeyings were the despair of his less energetic attendants.

Within the chapel we pictured him, enormously tall and fierce-featured, reading the service as was his custom upon each anniversary of the battle of Poltava. A man of monstrous contradictions — utterly regardless of his moral obligations, but never-failing in his observance of church form, and rites!

In the three-roomed cottage which served as the first Imperial Residence in the new capital we saw the celebrated boat which Peter modelled and tooled. From this seed sprouted the Russian navy.

"Such as it is and has been," commented my husband.

"But Russia's new ships, Philip — isn't it true that they are to be splendidly modern in construction and armament? I look upon you as a dependable authority on such matters."

"Your confidence is flattering, my dear. It is a —" I did not hear the end of the sentence, for I had discovered our Vanka kneeling just behind us. To all appearances he was praying to a wonder-working ikon, and yet, I fancied he was not entirely engrossed by his devotions. That absurd suspicion again! How could our casual conversation interest a grimy *isvostchik*, even if it were intelligible to him?

"This light is just right for an exposure," remarked Philip as we came out of the ex-palace. He stepped back a dozen yards and stared into the finder. The cabman, emerged from his prayers, sat down on the step of the *drosky*.

"How many feet should you call it to the fortress?" consulted my spouse.

"Now, Philip, you know I can't guess distance."

"Well, I'll set it at a hundred." He had adjusted the focus and his hand was hovering over the bulb, when he looked up with a frown and closed the camera with an exclamation of impatience.

"What do you suppose I've done?" he propounded. I guessed, and guessed correctly. He had come off without loading the kodak, so that it was, for the time, a useless appendage. We had already lost three days waiting for our permit, and I am afraid I said something cross about "thoughtlessness" and "wasted opportunities." Anyway, Phil looked hurt, and I was sorry in a minute, and said so. Little did we know how unpleas-

ant an experience his forgetfulness had postponed for us!

Down the quay we drove towards the Hermitage and the Winter Palace, still bent upon our pilgrimage to the shrines of Peter.

“Lucky we!” I remarked. “According to *our* calendar, the galleries are closed for the summer; but by Russia’s ‘old style’ reckoning we have two days of grace. We shall need those two days and more to see its treasures.”

“It’s a good thing we were advised in time about securing our embassy permit to enter the palace.” I turned and stared sharply at my husband.

“Philip Houghton, you haven’t by any chance —?”

“Forgotten said permit? No, my love. It resteth with other hieroglyphic documents granting us official privilege to eat, to sleep, to get up, and to lie down again.” Out of his pockets he brought various papers, and we tried to decipher them. But the S’s seemed to be C’s, the V’s invariably F’s, the H’s all G’s. As the alphabet contains no letter H, our name degenerated into Gouggtton, and Gouggtton we were usually called by our chance Russian acquaintances. I had learned a few words of the language under the tutelage of the Russian cabin-boy on the *Zara*, but its abcedary mazes were still far beyond my ken. I quoted from my note-book:

Thirty-six letters in alphabet	{	Eleven vowels
		Three semi-vowels
		Twenty-one consonants
Derivation	{	Hebrew
		Armenian
		Greek

Originators	{ St. Methodius St. Cyril }	Ninth Century
Russian language	{ Dialect of the Slavonian Complex grammar Contains no articles }	
Verbs	{ Regular Irregular }	Have endings determining modes of action
Nouns	{ Two numbers Three genders Seven cases }	Declined as in Latin

Philip made a weak joke about declining the nouns in any language, which I ignored; whereat he possessed himself familiarly of my right hand and stubbornly resisted my efforts to withdraw it as we came up to an erect gorodovoy at a street crossing. The policeman hid an embarrassed smile behind a white cotton hand.

"There, you've given it away to the Police Department!"

"Given what away?"

"You know."

"No I don't. What?"

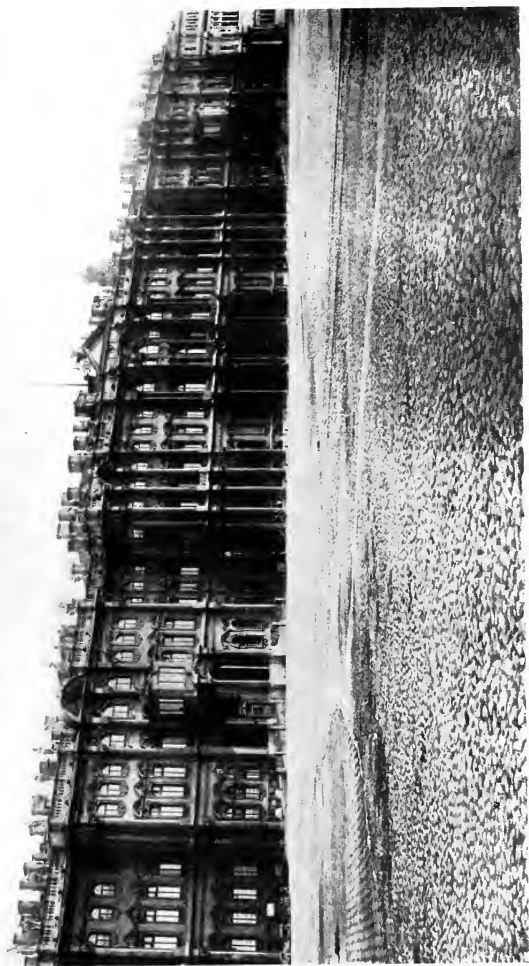
"Why, that we are honeymooners in Russia."

I fear travel has not taught me that fine scorn of tourists' "sights" affected by some. Palaces, cathedrals, museums, parks, "quarters"—all hold an interest for me quite amazing. I like, and Philip likes, to "do" what there is to be "done" with all the thoroughness of the maligned tourist. If in subsequent newspaper reading, I see that the authenticity of the portrait of Lady D. has been questioned, it is agreeable to remember that self-

same picture as it hung on the wall to the right of a gallery entrance. If a steamer is wrecked off Valdez, Alaska, there is a morbid satisfaction in being able to recall just how the coast appeared to those who suffered shipwreck. If there has been a ball in Cairo, an earthquake in Chile, a fire in New Orleans, or a scourge in Brisbane, each newspaper account flashes a vivid remembrance before me. Likewise, I am sufficiently republican in birth and upbringing to enjoy a glimpse of despised royalty. The German Emperor reviewing the Berlin Garrison or speeding through the Thiergarten in a white motor-car; the King of Spain driving at midnight with Loubet on the Avenue de l'Opéra half a minute before a bomb splintered his carriage; a Shah at his prayers; Queen Wilhelmina receiving at The Hague; the King of Norway leaving a Danish castle when still a modest Prince of Denmark — I thank Fortune for having had the opportunity to see these personages, for their names mean history, and the sight of them a more vital interest in that history.

Despite our sight-seeing ardour, however, the Winter Palace and the Hermitage presented an array of objects of art and historical interest quite discouraging. When we had paid off our curious cabby at the great door on the Neva side of the palace, an impressive lackey admitted us, together with the guide already engaged and waiting.

We went up a marble stairway to the apartments and galleries of the most spacious palace in Europe, if not the most splendid. I suppose Philip is as fond of art as most Americans of his sex, but I am sure he found the historical paintings of less interest than the display of



WINTER PALACE, ST. PETERSBURGH

gold and enamel plates which hung rim to rim about many of the enormous rooms. Our guide, who was of indeterminate nationality, spoke English with so puzzling an accent and insistent a volubility that we wished it had been possible to wander through the Imperial Residence with no conductor but our silent red Baedeker. We did learn from him, however, that the wall-plates were gifts to the Royal Family upon wedding or birth or feast days.

"They look jolly like jewelled soup-plates to me," said disrespectful Philip. "How should you like a dozen of those in your china cabinet, Jená?" Jená, pronounced with a y, is Russian for wife, and I was "Jená Gouggtou" to my husband throughout our Russian tour.

A marvellous table presented to a former emperor by an Italian king showed a spring-time picture done in finest mosaic. It was inconceivable that mere hands and fingers could have sorted and placed such infinitesimal bits of coloured stone. Not in Italy itself had we seen mosaic equally fine. In the white and silver salon, I recalled a description of a court ball which I once heard from the lips of a young attaché.

The guests enter the palace by the great doors on the Neva, and ascend by the Ambassadors' Stairway to the white ballroom. In the square outside the coachmen tramp to and fro in the snow and warm themselves at the charcoal fires lighted on these occasions under temporary sheds. Young beauties, doyennes, diplomats, officers; chiffons, jewels, court uniforms, gleaming helmets and swords, cartridge-cases and spurs form the enchanting picture within. Under the sparkling chandeliers, with a background of palms, over a glistening floor, the dancers move to the measure of mazurka and waltz,

quadrille and promenade. A maid of honour, distinguished by the shoulder knot of blue caught with the diamond monogram of her Empress, dances with a Lancer in a crimson coat; a grand Duchess honours a court chamberlain whose back bears an embroidered key; a Hussar, whose sable and gilt-trimmed coat hangs from his shoulders, responds with adoring eyes to the piquant glances of an Ambassador's daughter; a ruffle catches upon a spur, and an aide-de-camp stoops at the feet of a Princess.

Apart from the press of the frivolous, the "Most High" himself, and his consort graciously converse with war-seasoned generals, ministers, and dowagers of the court, whose costumes blaze with gems, orders, and priceless lace. Tender nothings, alluring gossip, hints of graver affairs, are drowned beneath the accent of the music. No ballroom in the world of kings offers so sumptuous a picture.

Through the windows facing the square, we gained a better idea of the height of the Alexander I Column than is possible from the street. It is the tallest modern monolith, but it loses impressiveness through the waste of cobblestones about it.

I wanted to sit upon the throne of Peter the Great, but Philip disapproved so emphatically that I gave up the idea, and contented myself trying to imagine the figure of the gaunt reformer, seated here in state accepting the scant homage of cavilling courtiers.

We knocked at the door of a room at the south end of the great red stucco palace. An aged attendant turned a key within, and we entered a sanctuary — the private room of the murdered Alexander II.

Here they brought his bleeding body, and laid him upon the single cot which is shielded by a curtain. From his pockets they removed the trivial possessions he had taken with him when he went that morning to the review of the guards in the riding-school on the Michael Square. They lie now on his desk — a few kopeks, the equivalent of thirty cents, an old knife, and some cigarettes. Upon his unpretentious dressing-table, his brushes remain undisturbed, not brushes of gold and ivory, monogrammed and surmounted by an Emperor's crown, but brushes half-worn and shabby.

In order to thwart frequent attempts to kill him, he had forsaken his regal apartments in another part of the palace to write and read and sleep in this room, unknown to all but his most trusted attendants. There is to me something almost sacrilegious about entering as a curiosity-seeker these undisturbed rooms of the dead. In life we should not have been welcome. Intrusion after death is presumption. We stole quietly from the pitiful apartment, where a dying Gosúdar had ended in agony his life's tragedy.

The Crown Jewels, safeguarded in the Sokrovník, or Treasury, were especially interesting because of the presence among them of the immense diamond which points the Imperial sceptre. Count Orlov, another of Catherine the Second's favourites, presented the jewel to her, and she rewarded him by giving it his name. It weighs almost two hundred carats, but is not so perfect as the Koh-i-noor nor so beautiful as the Pitt diamond, owned by France. The crown of Russia is a dome of stones, gorgeously variegated as to size and colour, but possessing in common a princely value. To my feminine

taste, the coronet of the Empress appeared more lovely, for it is all of diamonds, and as exquisitely conceived an ornament as it is possible to imagine. We tried to count the gems, but the glittering mass so dazzled our eyes that we stopped at the two hundred and twenty-fifth. In long glass cases there were royal gifts, each stone of which stood for a fortune. There were historic gems, jewelled orders, buttons, buckles, rosettes, bows, girdles, aigrettes, plumes, fans, armlets, diadems.

"Come away," commanded my practical husband; "if we look any longer we shall lose all sense of values."

I shall always remember one jewel which we saw in the private chapel of the Tsar. It lay as an offering to a gold-shrouded ikon, a great pear-shaped sapphire, royally blue, regal, superb.

The adjacent Hermitage, Catherine's retreat from the restlessness of court life, is a treasure-house of foreign and Russian paintings. Tintoretto, Titian, Guido Reni, and Dolci are represented in the Italian Galleries; Franz Hals, Jan Steen, Cuyp, Dow, Hondeköter, Matsys, Rubens, Van Dyck, uphold the glory of the Flemish and Dutch schools. Two of Van Dyck's portraits were purchased from the English Houghton collection, to which we were not at all loth to claim relationship. The wealth of the Spanish gallery detained us when we returned the next day to complete our tour of the palace. It is called the finest collection of Spanish masterpieces out of Spain, and numbers a score of Murillos and a half-dozen by Velasquez. In other rooms there are pictures by Le Brun, Lorraine, Del Sarto, Vos, Reynolds, Greuze, Raphael; likewise a fair representation of native art.

Orlovsky's horses, Brülöw's Last Day of Pompeii, and Neff's Nymphs are well-known.

But the glory of the Hermitage Gallery is its unrivalled number of Rembrandt's paintings. The Louvre and the Berlin Galleries together contain less than a score of his works. The Ryks at Amsterdam has, of course, two of his greatest achievements. In all Holland, however, there are not so many examples of his genius as there are within the walls of the Hermitage, which is distinguished by the possession of forty-one pictures by the Master of Light and Shadow, varying from his earliest to his latest manner and extending over a period of thirty years. The sixty paintings by Rubens, the thirty-four Van Dycks, the forty examples each of Teniers, Ruysdael, and Wouwermans also offer exceptional opportunities for studying Dutch and Flemish art. It was during Peter the Great's tours in Holland that very many of the Dutch pictures were purchased; up to that time Russia knew almost nothing of foreign paintings, and had developed few artists of her own. No gallery in Europe of its size and worth is so little known and appreciated as this one at St. Petersburg. Probably no other has so few visitors, for not many tourists come this way, and the commoners of Russia, who form ninety per cent. of her population, are not freely admitted to her few institutions of art. We forsook masterpieces for curios when we entered the Peter I Museum, which we had intended to see the previous day. Stuffed dogs and horses, books and tools, swords and chariots interested us less than the many portraits and statues of the monarch's face and figure.

I had had no real conception of his great height until

I saw it indicated at nearly seven feet upon a wooden measure. Gigantically tall, with raven hair, protruding cheek- and jaw-bones, and prominent eyes; actuated by passionate impulses and a conquering will, intemperate, murderous, versatile, ingenious, faithful to the interests of his country as he perceived them — what a barbaric picture, what a tangle of contradictions and complexities his memory presents! His father was the mild and good Alexis; his mother, the modest and beautiful ward of Alexis' favourite minister. While dining at his house informally, Alexis saw the girl, and became interested in her matrimonial future. Many men loved her, but none would marry a dowerless maiden, so one day Alexis announced to her guardian that a man had been found who would take her, dowered only with a sweet face and womanly virtues. And this man was the Emperor of Russia. And thus Peter the Great's mother became an Empress.

His father had already introduced Dutch ship-builders and their craft, so Peter came naturally by his obsession for all things relating to a navy.

He went to Western Europe first as Peter Mikhailov, an attaché, and when he became a dock-yard labourer he was called Peter Baas, or Master Peter. In England he met our William Penn, whose proposed visit to Russia in later years was discouraged by Catherine the Great.

Despite the opposition of the entire nation, which abhorred the rest of Europe, he crowded innovations and reforms upon Russia in his consuming desire to place his empire on a civilised footing. Some of his ukases related to affairs hardly worthy the attention of a monarch. He forbade the wearing of beards, and made an excep-



TSAREVITCH ALEXIS



tion of only those who paid a special tax. These favoured ones received a brass medal as a receipt, and some of these relics we saw in the museum. He slew thousands of his subjects, and tortured many thousands more, breaking them on a wheel, or hanging them up to die with a hook about a rib. And yet, when he saw fellow-beings struggling in the Neva and about to drown, he threw himself into the cold waters, thereby contracting an illness from which he died. A monstrous problem!

“Peter the Great — Scoundrel, someone called him, you remember,” said Philip, as we looked at a ring set with the Tsar’s portrait beneath a pink diamond. Through a rosy crystal most historians have seen him and portrayed his life accordingly. It is a question whether his chief claim to fame does not lie in the fact that he was inordinately persevering, and extravagantly vain. Unbiassed study of his story does not disclose him as a philanthropist seeking only his country’s good, but as a despot breaking the will of a nation upon the wheel of his own conceit.

A hundred years before the Russo-Japanese fiasco, a Mikado, with more contempt for Russia than regard for the feelings of her Emperor, Alexander I, sent back a pair of ivory vases, now shown in the museum, “since he could not accept gifts from an inferior.” That would constitute a *casus belli* now-a-days, and yet gigantic Russia ignored it a century ago.

In the presence of the beautiful Unattainable it amuses me to select for my own the one object I find most desirable. Here in the Hermitage Musée, I chose a wonderful goblet of gold, and Russian enamel which is used at the marriage of imperial lovers. But Philip wanted

most an inch-high parrot cut from a single emerald, a gift from a long-ago king to his Savoy bride. We smiled, my king and I, as we detected the sentimental in each other's choice. We sauntered back through the long galleries loth to leave a jewel unseen or a relic undiscovered. There was an array of brushes, boxes and mirrors in gold filigree which Phil thought I should have for my London dressing-table. Not to be outdone in generosity, I selected for future imaginative promenades, a walking-stick with a handle of jasper smothered in diamonds.

Supported by monster carvings, the Hermitage porch looks across the Bolshaia, or Great, Neva to the Peter-Paul Fortress with its gilt spire as thin as a sapling pine; to the University, founded in 1736; to the Stock Exchange with a chapel attached where members pray before going on 'change at four in the afternoon; to the Academy of Arts and Sciences, and to the Russian equivalent for our Annapolis Naval Academy.

Down the English Quay to the left, the Admiralty and Senate buildings flank the equestrian memorial to the city's namesake, erected by Catherine II. In the distance lie "the Islands"—Yelagin, Kammenoi, Krestovski; and the shallow waters of the Gulf of Finland. On the river we saw barges which had come all the way from the cities of the Volga with cargoes of lumber and grain. The long voyage had so wracked their joints that they would probably be broken up, like so many of their fellows, and sold for firewood to the citizens of Petersburgh, or Piterburgh, as Peter liked to call it in honour of the Dutch.

As our hotel was near by, we walked across the Palace

Square and past the little park where on a certain tragic January day the sabres of the Cossacks were drawn against a company of overworked and underpaid artisans who had assembled under the windows of the Little Father to ask his counsel. I remembered how in Paris I had read to my mother the wording of their petition, and how we had both wept over the simplicity of its expression and the brutality of its reply.



Chapter V.

A CHAPTER OF OUTINGS

“*CAN’T* we be a little gay to-night?” my husband inquired, as we made as extensive a dinner toilet as the paucity of our baggage allowed. I was for going to bed early in preparation for the water excursion planned for the morrow, but got no encouragement from my energetic Tsar. So after an uncommonly good dinner we were off to the Zoological Garden, relying upon the courier’s statement that there was sure to be music and a crowd if nothing else.

Outside the wooden gate we saw a young non-commissioned officer marched off for smoking in the street. If he had worn even a lieutenant’s chevrons he might have enjoyed his cigarette undisturbed.

We sat down at a table near the casino and ordered the inevitable tea, while a military band boomed and fluted a fascinating air from Chàikovsky’s “Pique Dame.” The crowd seemed as merry as the tune, promenading before the animal cages, making Russian jokes, and smoking incessantly. Sentimental officers in the now-familiar long army coat, sauntered with their inamoratas down paths none too shady, since the sun had not yet set. Fathers surrounded by a numerous family turned over the pages of the day’s *Novosti* or *Rech*, and occasionally interrupted the tea-sipping to share a newsy paragraph with the wife — usually fat, rarely fair.

German influence cannot be said to lend pictur-

esqueness to the female garb in this part of Russia. A tight-breasted bodice trimmed down the centre with a row of buttons, a skirt with as little style as usually marks one that is "made in Germany," an unbecoming hat set upon a plain coiffure above a sallow face: this is an honest picture of an every-day mother in North Russia. The men were far more impressive in manner and appearance. As Philip put it, "They had an air," accentuated by dapper clothes and scrupulously-trained moustaches.

Waiters frequently passed among the tables refilling samovars with water. An average Russian family's capacity for "yellow *chài*" is limitless, and they drink until the original strength of the tea is exhausted, the company resolving itself into a hot water- rather than a tea-party.

When the sun had gone down, the open-air theatre attracted the promenaders. We took a seat near the rear expecting to see a programme characteristic of Russia. "At least we shall have some Russian dances," I prophesied. But the programme, translated into French, foretold little of native individuality. Coarse German comedy and knock-about turns were interlarded with songs by Hungarian and Italian soubrettes in knee-length satins. For the anticipated Kamarinsky, a quartette of dancers substituted a Slavonic interpretation of the cake-walk. The audience was immensely amused — and so were we!

The hour was close to midnight. The "spectacle" for which we waited was billed after the intermission, and Part I was far from completion. Philip, weary of a hard seat and an arid programme, suggested a stroll. In the aisle we found an usher.

"Ask him when the Chino-Japanese war comes off," I urged.

"Ask him? None of these fellows knows anything but Russian. *You* ask him!" This with a grin which aroused a determination to exhibit what Russian I had lately acquired. So I began:

"Pajaluïsta, katóry chas?" at the same time indicating a number on the programme designated as

FIRE-WORKS AND BALLET

CHINO-JAPANESE WAR

To my gratification and Philip's confusion, the good man understood me perfectly, for he courteously replied, "Teppèr tri chāsa, Sudarynya," courteously, but unintelligibly, for my acquaintance with the language did not as yet extend to the numerals. In the end, Philip relieved the situation by pointing first to the programme number and then to his watch dial. A stubby finger indicated the figure 3, giving us to understand that the *pièce de resistance* would not be enacted until day-break!

Later visits to resorts and theatres accustomed us to the all-night habit of the Russians, but this, our first experience, was a bit staggering. We both agreed that a third-rate replica of Paine's Fireworks was scarcely worth a three-hour wait, and on the stroke of twelve we drove back to bed.

At seven I was awakened by an ejaculation.

"There! I was afraid we would."

"Are you talking in your sleep, Philip?"

"No, I'm not. What do you suppose we forgot to see in the Winter Palace?"

"Nothing, I should say. What?"

"The hand of John the Baptist!"

"No!"

"Yes! And I anticipated that most of all."

"Never mind," I consoled, "you shall see an urn containing drops of his 'veritable blood' when we reach Moscow."

I began to discuss our lunch basket for the boat trip to Schlüsselburgh, and by degrees he forgot his disappointment. We went marketing directly we had finished breakfast. A shop not far away yielded rye bread and a spicy Russian cheese, which we voted out-Gruyèred Gruyère. A four-ruble jar of pearl ikra was Philip's extravagance. The salty black sturgeon roe known to epicures outside Russia, he scorned, demanding the unsalted grey caviar freshly imported from the Caspian. A comb of honey, a raw cucumber, some unsalted butter, a lemon and a pinch of tea were tucked into corners of the willow basket of peasant make. Likewise a bottle of raspberry kvas. At the hotel, we added a wee samovar and a cold roast grouse. On the way to the landing we bought for me a box of Krepov caramels, and for Philip a pack of Russian cigarettes, which he had come to think the finest rolled.

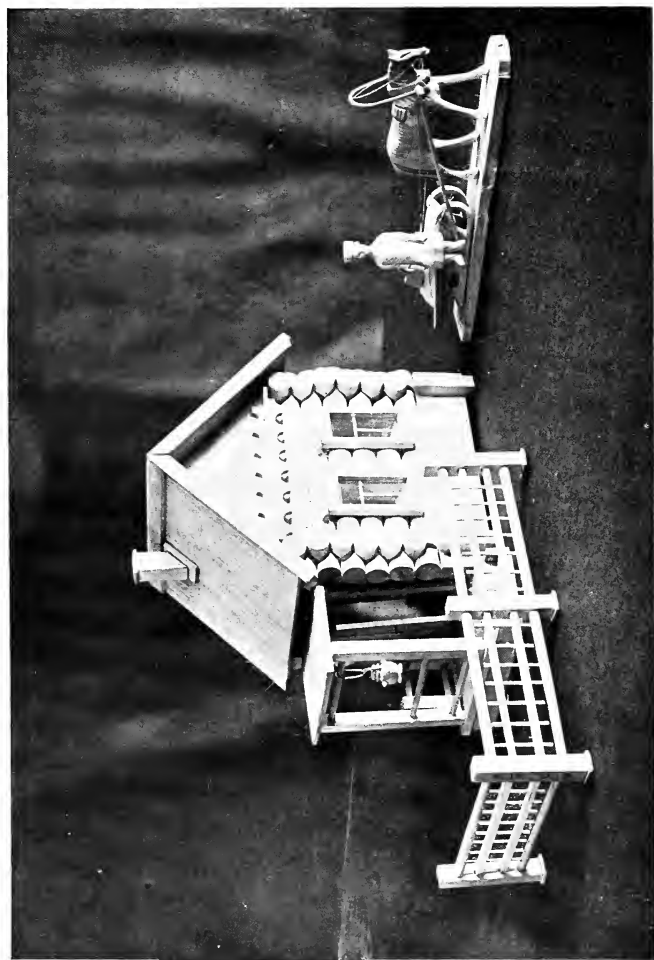
The small steamer which carried us the forty miles to the Neva's source was patterned after American excursion boats, as is the case on many European waters. With our precious hamper between us, we sat by the railing and watched great factories slip by on the bank

of the yellow river. Colonies of workmen's houses stood in the background. One large building housed the Porcelain Works of which we had read. The indefatigable Catherine encouraged here the creation of exquisite ceramics which are always stamped with the crowned initial of the reigning Tsar.

The sight of extensive cotton and iron mills gave us quite a notion of St. Petersburg's manufacturing interests, though they are far less important than those of Moscow. The English who once controlled and superintended most of the large manufactories in North Russia have, in many cases, been forced out by the jealous aggression of the Russians themselves, who have served their apprenticeship, and are now ambitious to be masters of their own commerce. There are many factories, however, which retain an Englishman as manager, for the executive ability of the average Russian is not usually a well-developed characteristic, though the workmen have clever fingers and are exceedingly apt in imitation.

After we passed the Neva Rapids we saw the forest slopes of old estates and the ruins of once splendid homes. "A sort of Rhino-Hudsonian effect," according to Philip. At Schlüsselburgh we disembarked after a four-hour struggle against the current. We ignored the drosky-men and trudged along the streets of the sizable city in true picnic fashion. Somewhere on the banks of Lake Ladoga, largest inland body of water in all Europe, we were sure of finding a reposeful spot under a tree.

When we finally emerged upon a country road, our long tramp was rewarded by the discovery of an idyllic lakeside picnic ground just large enough for two. As it was well past one o'clock, we immediately delved into



REPRODUCTION OF AN IZBA, MADE BY A VOLGA PEASANT



the basket and began to set forth upon the impromptu table-cloth the appetising edibles. Philip was wrestling with a cork, and I was equally engaged attempting, with a jack-knife, to slice the bread to a tasty thinness, when a dust-raising *teléga* rumbled by. A drunken roar from the bottom of the wagon indicated the location of the *muzhik* driver. Scarcely a minute later, the noise of a collision and a groan brought us to our feet and sent Philip down the road. I covered over the luncheon and followed, trying to recall certain rules of "First Aid."

Beneath a broken bicycle we found a tall young fellow of perhaps twenty-four. He lay in the road face down, and was apparently unconscious. Aroused by the crash, the farmer was peering over the waggon-side, his eyes bleary with vodka. Philip raised the wrecked bicycle and lifted the boy's head out of the dust. His face was chalk-white and streaked with blood from a wound beneath his blond hair.

"Here, you drunken rascal, get down out of there and help me carry this man!" called Philip. The *muzhik* stared and smiled. Philip waved his free arm and pointed to the limp figure, but the besotted Ivan Ivanovitch merely continued to smile and stare. Consigning his charge to me, Phil made a dash for the *teléga* wheel, laid hold of the *muzhik*'s ragged shoulder and pulled him bodily over the side. To my surprise, the cause of our predicament kept his balance, and in a few moments more was able to assist in carrying the wounded boy to the shade under our picnic tree. I got out Phil's flask and thanked Providence that the *samovar* was already boiling. For ten minutes we did all we knew to bring life to that half-dead face, so strangely un-Russian.

Ivan, now more his sober self, brought his horse and tied him to a tree, and then went to fetch cupfuls of cool water from the lake, with which I bathed the white temples. As we waited for some encouraging sign of returning consciousness, Philip hunted the bicyclist's pockets through for some hint of his identity. A few letters addressed in Russian were all we found until I came upon a *carte de visite* photograph signed, "Your Cicely." It had been taken in Philadelphia. Then I understood who it was we had found here by Lake Ladoga, wounded through the carelessness of an intoxicated muzhik. Too amazed for speech, I had not recovered myself sufficiently to explain to Phil before our patient's eyelids trembled and he drew a deep sigh. Then he opened his eyes and tried to raise his head. "Where am I?" he said in English.

"With some friends of Cicely's," I replied. He smiled and turned his head dreamily, while my husband stared at us each in turn. In explanation I held out the little photograph.

"By Gee! You don't suppose —?"

"I suppose nothing. This is Jerry Drake, Cicely Hazard's fiancé. If we hadn't picnicked to-day in this very place, he might have died under the hoofs of a Russian farm-horse. Don't you remember Cicely's writing me last year that he had been sent off after he graduated at Princeton to help manage some of his father's Russian business interests?"

"Well, of all the coincidences —!"

"It's too wonderful!" I exclaimed, my voice trembling with excitement.

"What is?" said young Drake, opening his eyes again,

Then: "What are you two doing here talking English?" At that he caught sight of Ivan standing by his cart, and began to swear Slavonic oaths. Evidently, the memory of the collision had come back to him. His words apparently gave to the peasant the first clue he had gained as to his share in the accident. His contrition was really affecting. He ran with his cap off and knelt to kiss Drake's hand, which was quickly withdrawn. "Get up, you! It's all right, but why don't you give up this vile potato brandy? How's your horse — good for a drive in to Schlüsselburgh?" This half in English, half in Russian. The farmer nodded his head and, going back to his springless waggon, began to arrange some straw in the bottom and to fold a sheepskin coat for a pillow. Philip carved the grouse and I made the tea. We did not speak, for young Jerry Drake lay very quiet, to all appearances asleep.

After five minutes, with no sound but the gentle laving of the waters, he pulled himself upright, and inquired, "Now will you be so good as to repeat what you said when I first asked where I was?"

"With some friends of Cicely's," said I, and took up the picture which lay at my hand. He reached for it and devoured it with his young brown eyes.

"Of Cicely's?" he repeated.

"Yes, of Cicely Hazard's, my dear school room-mate. I am Phil Houghton's wife. Did she write you?"

"Then you are, or were, Joyce Langdon?"

"None other," I assured him, "and very happy to have been at your service in far-off Russland." It was all explained finally — how he had come out from Petersburg for a day's run on his wheel, had seen the muzhik's

galloping horse, how he had turned out to safety, as he supposed, and in the end had found himself propped against a tree with luncheon ready to serve. We drank to his sweetheart in raspberry kvas, not forgetting to offer the contrite Ivan a glass. We made away with cheese and caviar, the honey and the fowl. By the time the basket was empty, our young knight of the wrecked wheel declared himself equal to the drive into Schlüsselburgh. We made an odd party, Jerry Drake reclining against the peasant's soiled coat, the peasant himself sitting up in front and driving sedately enough now, and we two American picnickers. We left the bicycle by the roadside, "a monument to King Vodka," Jerry called it.

Our invalid rested at an inn while we took a drosky around by the canal locks which, through Peter's enterprise, make navigation possible between the Baltic and the Caspian, by way of the Volga. The sight of the infamous fortress of Schlüsselburgh aroused memories of historic dramas played within its battlements. The two Tsars murdered at the will of Catherine II were imprisoned here at the same time, and one of them, Ivan VI, found his grave in the moat, buried in a sheepskin coat, though by birth entitled to a tomb in the Peter-Paul mausoleum. Here, another of Catherine's victims, her husband's cousin, was imprisoned and done to death. Because Catherine feared her as a possible rival for the throne, she detailed one of her lovers, Count Georg Orlov, brother to the one who had given her the famous diamond and by whom she had also had a child, to go to Italy and make love to the young Princess Tarakhenov. Count Georg, whose own hands had helped to strangle Peter III, had no scruples about luring a young girl to

torture and death. He persuaded her, with the arts of a lover, to marry him. Believing herself honestly wooed, she consented to become his countess, and quite innocent of the trap, went with her pseudo-husband aboard a ship then at Leghorn and set sail for Russia. Her foot had scarcely touched the deck when she was thrown into chains and a temporary prison. She was released only to be shut up within the blood-stained walls of Schlüsselburgh, eventually her tomb. The island upon which the present prison stands has been the site of a similar structure for nearly six hundred years. Swedes and Slavs fought over it until Peter the Great definitely settled the contest by seizing the territory about it.

Thousands of "politicals" have been sentenced to imprisonment beneath its towers — men and women whose only crime was a desire and an effort to redeem their benighted country from barbaric oppression more than eight hundred years old.

By seven o'clock we were back at the St. Petersburg landing opposite the Summer Gardens. Jerry, still a little pale, could not be persuaded to dine with us, so we took him to the train for Strelna, and parted, with promises for an early renewal of our wayside friendship.

"Good-bye," he called from the door of the car. "I shall write Cicely to-night all about the life-saving station on the shores of Lake Ladoga!"

We had dinner in our room and went early to bed, rather played out by the exciting termination of our rural excursion.

Nearly all the next day was spent in the Imperial Library and in the Museum of Carriages. The Library is rich in the possession of manuscripts centuries old. In

antiquity many of these parchments surpass any owned elsewhere in the world. The British Museum cannot begin to boast of so interesting or valuable a collection of religious manuscripts, many of which are inscribed in almost forgotten tongues and are illuminated with gold and silver. The Ostromir manuscript is the oldest known in the Slavonian language, and is dated 1056.

We found very interesting the cases filled with copies of the Bible translated into nearly every existing tongue, memorials to the zeal of linguistic missionaries.

In the newspaper room were journals from all the world. As I turned the first page of the *Manchester Guardian* I discovered a half column of reading-matter effectually blotted out by the application of something which resembled black sand. When I called Philip's attention to it, he assumed a patronising air and expressed himself as chagrined at his wife's ignorance.

"That is the censor's work. You must know that no newspaper may be delivered to an ordinary subscriber having no special privileges, until it is examined. If matter derogatory to Russia or relating to the Tsar is found it is 'killed' by 'passing it into caviar.'"

"Thank you," I replied. "Do you suppose that is why the customs' officers looked so critically through the *London Times* wrapped around the overshoes in my bag?"

For an hour we amused ourselves going through English and American papers searching for news, and for more examples of the censor's industry. In the *New York Herald* of June ninth we came upon the notice of our own wedding, and of our sudden departure "for the groom's new field of labour." At which we laughed, for



“THE PEASANT LOVERS,” BY BEKEMICHEV

the "field of labour" was miles and weeks away and our faces were turned from London towards Moscow and Nizhni, Yalta and Odessa, Kiev and Warsaw for a long honeymoon.

We lunched at Dominique's and later walked to Stable Street to see the imperial carriages — carriages painted by Watteau and decorated by Gravelot, gilded and jewelled and crowned; carriages trimmed with lace and incrustated with pearl; sledges, broughams, phaetons, two-wheeled carts.

Peter's sledge, which he himself constructed from shaves to runners, is shown beneath a glass case. The windows are made of mica. Quite like a modern touring-car, the sledge is fitted with a "week-end trunk" rack to accommodate the Emperor's travelling outfit. A hundred-year-old drosky has a feature also used on modern vehicles — a primitive cyclometer to record time and distance, with the additional advantage that an automatic music-box is operated by the revolution of the wheels.

Philip, "lover of horses," had taken the precaution to secure a permit to see the imperial stables where hundreds of horses are kept in winter, though most of them are distributed in summer among the Emperor's various residences. Those intended for the Tsar's personal use are pure white and of the long-tailed and gentle Orlov breed. Five thousand dollars a month is expended in horse-feed for the inmates of the royal stalls.

Jerry came in one evening to invite us to go with him to hear the music at a summer garden on one of the Islands. The chief attraction was the singing of a fascinating Russian whose hold upon the male population of the capital was a matter of gossip. She was of a type

much admired by the Russian — chic, blond and indifferent, quite the antithesis of the beauty we accredit to the Russian women.

Though the voice itself was not remarkable for power or sweetness, the magnetism of the diva's singing was extraordinary, arousing her adoring audience to extravagant expressions of delight. A fetching popular air brought a rain of gold pieces about her, and cries of "Bis! Bis!" echoed under the trees. With a slight gesture for the orchestra conductor, she took up the melody again, languorous, enticing, disdainful. Her long eyes half closed as she swung into the flippant chorus, and her supple body swayed like a lily. As she reached the final measure, a tall man sprang down the grassy aisle and leapt up the steps from the orchestra to the stage. She gave a cry at sight of the figure in the Hussar's uniform, clasping her bare jewelled fingers to her cheeks. Her eyes were startled and full of fear. Half the men in the audience rose to their feet, the other half had recognised the man as her husband and sat still. With a moan the singer sank to her knees, and stretching her arms above her head cried over and over, "Non, Sacha, non!" The man stood over her speaking rapidly in Russian and apparently commanding her to get up. In a moment, she stumbled to her feet and followed him off the stage, her laces trailing over the coins which she had scorned to pick up. The orchestra began to play something diverting. The audience settled back in their chairs and resumed the tea and wine drinking.

"What is it?" I said to Jerry as he lighted a cigarette.

"The climax of a romance. This woman, 'the Sorcerer-

ess' they call her, was a child in the Foundling Asylum when she was adopted by an ironworker's family at Alexandrovski. She was singing one day in the little yard at the rear of the cottage when this fellow, the Hussar, passed on his horse and looked over the fence. He spoke to her. She replied. Finally he asked her if she would like an education and training for her voice. Of course she said yes, and so he arranged with her foster-parents to send her to a convent and to pay her expenses.

"I believe she remained there five years, or until she was nineteen. Then he took her out and married her, secluding her jealously on his estate south of Petersburg. He had to be in the Caucasus with his regiment. She was beautiful, talented and—lonely. Somehow she got to Petersburg and found an opportunity to sing in a theatre. Instantly she was the rage. Everyone went wild about her. She took apartments on the Millionaia, and lived sumptuously, singing every night and entertaining Grand Dukes and Princes. All this time no one knew who she was, nor where she came from. But one day the husband came back and found her gone from his place near Chudova. When he discovered her here, singing, and the sensation of the midnight restaurants, he was insane with jealousy and anger. He closed up her apartment and took her back to the country, swearing to kill her if she ever returned. For some time they lived on the estate and people almost forgot the enchantress. Finally the husband was ordered away again, and he went off happy in her promise to remain at their home away from old associations. But, like many Russian women, deceitful, idle, and pleasure-loving, she came back and of course had no difficulty securing engagements. You

saw how mad they were about her, and the fact that she was here despite her husband's threat only added a dash of romance. Evidently he has returned unexpectedly soon. Did you see her eyes?"

"But he won't kill her?"

"No, probably not, though he may beat her, for that is an undisputed prerogative of Russian husbands. The wife has no protection by law from her lord's hands, and does not dream of resenting violence whether deserved or not."

"Well, there's no doubt about the husband's justification in this case, at any rate," from Philip.

The fate of our siren interested me so keenly that after several days I inquired of the courier whether there had been a tragedy reported in the late journals.

"No, Madame," he replied, looking curious. I explained.

"Ah, Madame — murder — that is something not much known here. A beating — yes, but a husband does not often find it necessary to kill his wife to punish her." Which we thought a humane and unique attitude.



Chapter VI

THE PENALTY OF A SNAP-SHOT

“*T*O-DAY,” I said as we sat at our tea and rolls, “let us do something entirely unplanned. Let us give no orders, but drive where the coachie takes us. Eh?” Philip agreed, and accordingly we approached a cab with no recourse to picture-card and halting Russian. We made the bargain by the hour, signifying our indifference as to route and destination, and started down the Nevsky with a familiar jerk.

“Our old friend with the ears,” I murmured under cover of the rattle, and nodded towards the bulky kaftan.

“Oh, well, it can’t be anything but a coincidence,” returned my husband. “Why should *we* be under the eternal suspicion of the Third Section?”

“Aha!” I whispered back. “So you have come to think so too? I thought you scoffed at my theory concerning the white-haired man who seems always to be just around the corner. Of course we haven’t done anything to merit watching. Haven’t we refrained from saying even *nice* things about the Emperor? I am sure I never tried so hard not to talk about things I wanted to talk about. Did you see those men last night at Donon’s? They spoke in French. One of them quite casually mentioned His Imperial Majesty, and instantly everyone arose and left the table.”

“Afraid the waiter was a Secret Service agent, I suppose.”

"Yes, but how could they have implicated themselves by listening to their dinner companion's remark about the proposed cruise of the Tsar?"

"I give it up."

"Oh, see that lovely dressing-gown Tatar selling shoe-strings and things!" I exclaimed, suddenly aware of a half-turned ear.

"Let's photograph him," said Philip, and called "Stòi" to the driver, who immediately pulled in his horse. The descendant of former rulers of Muscovy obligingly posed, grinning in a most engaging manner. Afterwards he peered into the lens and said something which doubtless meant, "Now show me the picture." Since we could not do that we bought some of his wares before we left him on the curb, still smiling.

We drove out the avenue, across the Bolshaia Morskaja, which runs into the Nevsky at right angles and seconds it in importance; over the Catherine Canal, up which we saw the memorial church newly erected to the martyred Alexander; past the City Hall; the fire towers; the Bazaars, across the fashionable Fontanka Canal; past the Moscow station and so to the end of the three-mile Perspective.

We wound around a cobblestoned roadway which twisted and curved to the gate of what we judged to be merely a cemetery.

"Probably someone famous is buried here," I surmised, and correctly, as it turned out. On our left was a white ecclesiastical building, cloistered and severe. Winding walks and shrubbery gave the appearance of a park. A richly dressed lady led a little boy from the side of a new grave and entered her waiting linega. Then

we saw a monk turn a corner, and I knew where we were.

“This is the Alexander Monastery, third holiest shrine in Russia, seat of a Metropolitan, burial place of Alexander Nevsky, and of the composers Glinka, Rubinstein and Chàikowsky!” I had read about it only the night before while Phil and Jerry were dining at the Yacht Club with an attaché of the British Embassy. The reward of my lonely evening was at hand, and I forthwith displayed all the knowledge I possessed about the famous monastery. Peter the Inevitable founded the monastery or lavra in commemoration of the sainted warrior Alexander of the Nevsky, and Catherine built the magnificent cathedral. Within its doors we saw their portraits mounted upon great pillars. There were excellent copies of Rubens and Perugino, and the usual superb display of jewels, precious metals, and historic relics.

The splendid tomb of the lavra's namesake, St. Alexander, is of pure silver, sculptured in bas-relief and crowned by a trio of life-sized angels. In prosaic figures, over half a ton of silver was used in casting this noble shrine. Philip, almost six feet tall, could reach but half way up the side of the tomb alone, and a man on a twenty-foot ladder could barely have touched the top of the angels' heads.

The choral singing of men and boys in the monastery chapel is particularly notable upon the days when the imperial family is accustomed to attend at the celebration of a “perfect mass,” which, being unabridged, lasts almost four hours. The singers are trained in the Imperial Choir, an organisation of great distinction in Petersburg, where youths with promising talents are

educated for ecclesiastical singing, are lodged, and, in the end, pensioned by the Government. A family which produces an exceptional soprano or bass voice is regarded as the favourite of fortune, the parents having no need to plan for the son's future. Only members of the court are permitted to hear these rare voices except upon the annual occasion when the entire choral number of ninety-three boys and thirty-eight men unite in rendering for the hospitals a work by Mozart or Palestrina. A certain quality of voice is often the prized heritage of one family, son succeeding father, so that bass and tenor dynasties exist and are recognised by the deacons who select the choruses for the Orthodox Church.

Fabulous sums are paid to the lavra for the privilege of burying the dead in its sacred soil. The monastery is also possessed of an income from taxes, contributions, perquisites and bequests.

In the holy enclosure we found the flower-strewn graves of Russia's three most illustrious composers. Glinka, born a century ago, fathered the school of national music, and is especially beloved by his countrymen for the patriotic opera, "A Life for the Tsar." Anton Rubinstein associated Glinka with Beethoven, Bach, Schubert, and Chopin as the great architects of modern music. Aside from his genius as a composer and executant, Rubinstein figures large in the musical annals of the capital because of his connexion with the conservatory of which he was the founder and first director. This conservatory is the dean of all Russian institutions for musical learning and numbers upon its roll of renowned teachers and composers, Henselt, Wieniawski, Leschetizky, Chàikowsky, Davidov, Arensky, and Gabrilo-

vitsch. About thirteen hundred pupils attend the conservatory, though the professors complain that even the most talented rarely attain their proper measure of fame because of their native dislike for studious application and sustained effort.

Russia's master musician did not go for his inspiration to the heart of the people as did Glinka, though much of his work is built upon the minor foundation characteristic of Slavonic composition. Chàikowsky was born in East Russia, and died in Petersburg from the effects of drinking a glass of iced Neva water and thereby contracting cholera.

We left the burying ground and turned a gravelled walk. A "black priest," of whom there are over ten thousand in Russia, stood talking with a ragged beggar-woman. The cloistered monastery constituted a picturesque background for a photograph, the monk in his tall klobúki, and flowing hair, an equally picturesque subject. The sight of the camera sent the old crone hobbling down the path, making a poklon, or cross-sign, and muttering incantations discouraging to evil spirits. The Brother of St. Basil smiled with us at her terror. His soft eyes and gentle bearing recalled the monk in the Kazan.

"May we take your picture?" I asked, first in French, then in German — to no avail. The monk looked regretful, I perplexed. But Philip, ever fluent in the language of signs, successfully pantomimed our wishes. The brother's face brightened as he nodded. He arranged his hair over each shoulder and folded his plump hands over his gown. But hold! He must first assume garments worthy of so unusual an occasion. He beckoned

towards the monastery, and we followed him through the porch and down a long hallway, a trifle uncertain as to the propriety of our entering there. At the door of his "cell" the brother motioned us in. The room was small but undeniably cosy. On a mantel-piece were photographs of the occupant's family, and some trivial ornaments. The door of a diminutive bed-chamber stood open. A patchwork quilt across the foot of the bed gave a homely air. Instead of the whitewashed cell of the Roman Catholic brotherhoods, here were quarters not to be despised by a layman. When he had seated us with the manner of a child trying to play the host, our monk searched for an illustrated book and laid it on the table before us. Then he opened the windows to admit the breeze, and excused himself courteously before vanishing into the toy bedroom.

"Do you suppose this is proper?" I inquired. "Are women permitted to enter the cells of Russian brotherhoods? I shouldn't be a particle surprised to have the Metropolitan come and put me out."

"Oh, the monk probably knows what he is about. I hope he isn't going to take as long as a woman to dress, just because he wears skirts and long hair. I know he curls it." In ten minutes he appeared, his face shiny with soap, his gown changed to one of velvet, his wavy hair moistly combed, and crowned by a Sunday klobúki draped with a black veil. We went out to the shady porch.

"Just the place for a picture if the light were better," said the photographer, motioning his model back to a spot where the sun came through an archway. I



"THE CONQUERORS," BY VERESCHAGIN

perched on the balustrade. Philip calculated and adjusted. When we looked up, the monk was gone! We went to find him. Around the corner he stood, as self-effacing as a shy girl, disappointed and meekly puzzled. Evidently he had mistaken the signal to stand farther back, and had thought himself dismissed before the bulb was pressed. So Philip led him back to the spot of sunshine on the stone floor, and then he understood and smiled, happy again. He posed half a dozen times within the cloister and out on the green campus. When we parted, Philip took out his own card and signified his desire to have the monk's so we could send him the prints. In a moment he had gone to his room and returned again, bringing proudly a crude square of pasteboard printed in Russian. As each studied the other's card, the brother, who knew the Latin alphabet, spelled out the words:

PHILIP DEAN HOUGHTON

University Club
New York.

"New York?" he said. "Amerikánets?"

"Yes," Philip replied bravely. "Ya Amerikánets . . . putëshestvennik (traveller) and," indicating me, "sudarynya my jená."

"Da, da," assented the monk, shaking his head wisely, "nova jená," at which we all laughed. I think he offered his felicitations, though unfortunately we could not understand them. At any rate we parted cordially, with English promises to post the photographs and Russian expressions of gratitude.

At the gate, the droskyman slept on his box, his thick-brown beard sweeping to his belt. He roused as we stepped into the cab.

"Chài," directed Philip, "soup, butterbrod." Whereupon we jogged out the entrance and made for a lunching place.

We paid Vanka and added "na chài" (tea money, more often vodka money!), but when we came out again his now familiar countenance greeted us.

"Such devotion as this is its own reward," declared Phil, moving towards the cab, and again motioning "anywhere" as our destination.

"I don't know that I quite like it," I expostulated under my breath, "but I *presume* it is all right." Down the Liteinoi Prospekt, along the Quay, over a bridge, our little mare sped like the wind. A pedlar of singing-birds stepped unconcernedly from under her very hoofs. "Beregissa!" (Take care!) shouted the driver to the careless vender of melody, and "Yukh! Yukh!" to his horse as we dashed on again.

We came in view of wharves and masts. A small steamer from Christiania was loading with tallow; another from Helsingfors was deck-high with staves. At a distance we caught sight of the *Zara's* sister steaming up for her return to the Thames via Riga and Reval and Kiel. But on the whole it was not a point of extraordinary interest, and we were wondering why our guide had brought us hither when we saw across the inlet some great vessels on the ways. Their freshly-painted coning-towers proclaimed their kind.

"It's the navy yard!" exclaimed Philip, "and those are the new ships we were talking about. I suppose

there is no use applying for a permit to see them at closer range."

"No, the mere asking would mark us for suspicion."

"Well, at least I can take a photograph, though it won't be very satisfactory at such a distance." He re-filled the camera, thrusting the half dozen films of the monk into a side pocket. The isvostchik was looking down the river, inattentive and indifferent, so I thought. But a gorodovoy came our way and stood a few feet off regarding us.

"Philip," I whispered as I pretended to look into the finder, "there is a policeman watching. Are you sure it is not forbidden to take that picture?"

"Why this one, my dear girl? The permit is in my inside pocket. Take it out if you want to and see if that has any effect upon your friend the gendarme." I made a pretence of looking over the little document printed in Russian script, made out to Gospodin Gougton, and signed by Petersburg's chief of police. Still the policeman watched, while Vanka faced him and stared down the river. As Philip finished loading the kodak the sun peered over the edge of a cloud.

"That's better! Now I can make a snap-shot of it." With the click of the shutter I saw the cabby's hand go up, and then before my unbelieving eyes, one hand of the law fell upon the camera, the other upon Phil's shoulder. He looked around impatiently and tried to shake off the gorodovoy's fingers. "What in thunder—!" he began. I flourished the permit, feeling vaguely that that might help, but the gendarme ignored me and it, and spoke quickly to the droskyman. I thought the reply sounded as though the frowsy isvostchik gave an order

instead of receiving one. The Quay was almost empty of people. Only a few dock-hands stood staring dumbly at the two foreigners about to be taken off to gaol. A scream for help expired in my throat. I looked at my husband. He was smiling. "It's alright, dear. We'll drive to the Embassy and have this fixed up in two shakes of a lamb's tail. Climb in!" I obeyed, crouching on the little third seat of the cab while the policeman sat beside Phil. We crossed the bridge over which we had driven so gaily only a half hour before. It was Saturday afternoon and crowds of the "black people" from the mills were swarming by to the vapour baths. Suddenly I realised that, being Saturday, the Embassy staff would probably be out at some datcha or other for the week-end. We should be confined over Sunday, separated probably, overrun with vermin and stifled with hot smells. Of course I intended to go with Philip if *our* week-end villa was to be the city prison. I spoke to him about the closed Embassy, whereupon the gorodovoy said something imperative which silenced me. I could see the idea of our being actually imprisoned had begun to worry my big dear. I put a hand on his knee and kept it there, despite the suspicious eyes of our captor, who seemed to fear that I might spell out a secret message with my finger tips. As we clattered through the warm July streets, all I had suspected of the omnipresent cabman and the grey-haired man came back to me.

That we had actually been under the surveillance of the Secret Service ever since, perhaps before our arrival, I did not doubt; but why we two tourists had aroused their interest was as great a mystery as ever. Philip sat silent, with stern mouth and blazing eyes. We turned

down by the Admiralty and past St. Izaak's square. They were taking us to Police Headquarters. The policeman's hand was upon Phil's arm as he paid the droskyman and we entered the doorway, passing the very soldier who had stood there the day we came to get our permit.

Of the next ten minutes I have but a jumbled recollection of curious eyes, stumbling stairways and reiterated questionings. Finally we stood before the superb creature who had charmed us on that first day. Now he was impersonal, calm, chilling.

We were the American tourists who came here for the permission to photograph. Yes, he remembered us distinctly—in reply to Philip's appeal. Assuredly we might communicate with our Ambassador if we could find him or his assistants. This was the heated term: doubtless they were out of the city. Our questions as to the reason for the arrest were ignored until our names, ages and occupation were recorded. Then the suave one said coldly, "You apparently have not read your permit, Mr. Houghton." Philip smiled. "Unfortunately I do not know your language as well as you know mine. I presumed a permit signed by your excellency was sufficient to protect us from such experiences as this."

"You pretend that you do not know you are expressly forbidden to photograph fortresses, navy yards and bridges?"

"I affirm that this is the first intimation of the fact that I have received."

"You photographed this afternoon some vessels building in the navy yard on the Neva. A week ago you would have taken a picture of the Petropaulovski Krepost

had you not forgotten to supply yourself with necessary films."

"May I ask if this is why my wife and I are dragged here like a pair of criminals?"

"Of that we will advise you later, Mr. Houghton. In the meantime, is there someone to whom you would like to send a message? It is customary to allow this privilege under such circumstances."

"Jerry," I whispered, and Phil nodded.

"I have an American friend at Strelna. If he is home he will come, but I am not sure that he has returned from Finland, where he has been on business. At any rate, I know no one else." An orderly pushed a pad of telegraph blanks and a pencil towards Philip, and he wrote:

"Come to me if you can, old man. In trouble at Petersburg police headquarters. Joyce here with me. P. D. H." He put a ruble and the folded message into a messenger's hand.

"Now, Mr. Houghton, if you will kindly let me have the keys to your luggage, we will make you as comfortable as possible until your friend arrives, or you can furnish proof that your visit to Russia has no motive inimical to the Government."

"Inimical to the Gov—! I am afraid I do not understand. Madame and I are the merest tourists. If we have violated police laws by photographing some warships across the river, we are profoundly sorry. Any fine you suggest I will gladly pay to substantiate my regret, but as to any secret motive back of either the photographing or our visit, why—I don't know what you

are talking about!" Philip's urbanity was beginning to wane.

"I regret, Monsieur, that certain information received before your arrival compels me to doubt your statement. I trust before many days you may be able to clear yourself, however. It is unfortunate that in Russia one is presumed to be guilty until proven innocent."

"Before many days —!" I echoed, now half-faint with the growing terror of our position. The chief turned a calm eye upon me.

"You will return to your hotel, if you please, Madame. An officer will accompany you to search your luggage. You may bid your husband adieu."

"But I don't want to say good-bye! I am going to prison with him. Don't you know it is impossible for me to stay in a hotel and know my husband is here in gaol, in a *Russian* gaol, and we on our honeymoon, and I all alone, and — and — Philip," I sobbed, with my arms suddenly about his neck, "don't let them do it! There must be some other way. I can't go back alone to that room where we have been happy together, and leave you here. It is impossible — you must — Oh! —"

Hysterical women were no novelty to Petersburg's police chief. He smiled indulgently as Philip put me in a chair and tried tenderly to assist me to composure.

"It's all right, dearest. Jerry will come. He'll know someone who will help us out of this. I'll be back with you to-night. Be a good girl. The hotel is not far away. If you go quietly they may be less hard on me." He kissed me despite the chief's cynical eyes. I got out of my chair, and said, "I am ready, your excellency."

The orderly opened the door for me, but before I had crossed the threshold I turned back, woman-like.

“You won’t put him underground, Monsieur?”

“No, Madame, I promise you. Until our suspicions are confirmed your husband shall experience no inconvenience.” Phil’s dear eyes looked after me as the door closed, and I preceded the officer down the well-remembered stairs. At the entrance, a memory flashed upon me: the picture of the youth struggling and crying between the two unemotional policemen.

Only the courier and the dvornik saw me enter the hotel with my escort. I tried to say something to the former, but a sob conquered the words. He was a kind-hearted soul and came to me instantly with an offer of help. So we three went upstairs. I sat by the window while the mild-mannered policeman turned out the contents of the steamer trunks and looked into pockets and table drawers. He took away a letter from the New York office written to Phil while we were in London. I thanked Fate that the word Russia did not enter there, for distortion is one of the main stocks in trade of the Third Section. “Spassibo, Sudarynya,” he said politely as he put his heels together and made a deep bow. Then he turned the knob and left us. When I had poured my story into his sympathising ear, the courier also departed. I don’t know what time it was that a knock interrupted my crying. I only remember I was so exhausted that I staggered a little as I crossed to the door, where I found a boy with his hands full of letters — letters from home, forwarded from London to the *Crédit Lyonnais*, or sent directly here. They were the first we had had since our arrival, and as a hungry man eyes a feast, I scanned each



OUR HOST AT CRONSTADT

post-mark as I stood in the doorway. When I glanced up, a gendarme was tramping the corridor and looking inquisitively at my precious packet. I stepped back hastily, shut tight the door, turned the key, and slipped the bolt. . . . If they came for my blue and white and grey letters — they should find me prepared to resist! With a lapful of missives I turned page after page, full of love and congratulations upon our marriage — and my husband in Petersburg gaol! At that I fell to crying again. And so I read and cried and cried and read until a dinner arrived, ordered by the thoughtful interpreter below. But I could not eat, and sent the trays away to the disappointment of Dmitri, who looked at me with compassionate eyes. When he went out I heard him speak inquiringly to the gorodovoy in the hall.

It was almost nine and I was pacing the room in lonely dismay when a quick tap sounded at the door. A wave of weakness swept me from crown to sole as I steadied myself by the table. “Who are you?” I cried, breathless with fear. But it was Jerry who answered. I flew to the knob and dragged him in. “Have you seen him? Is there any hope? Will he be sent away? Oh, Jerry, Jerry, I am so frightened — why don’t you answer? I know what they do in Russian prisons; they torture and blind for less cause than we have given them. I have read all about it. Those students at Riga, don’t you remember? And that countess who talked indiscreetly? There was nothing, really nothing, criminal against them, but a street-flogging and Siberia was what they got. What will they do to my poor boy? I shall go to the mines, or wherever they send him. Wives are *allowed* to follow their husbands into exile, aren’t they? They

can't discriminate against foreigners. . . . I'll appeal to the State Department!" In my hysteria I saw Jerry go to the windows and close them. Then he put his hands on my shoulders and silenced me.

"Steady there, little girl! You shall go to Siberia if you want to, but not as the guest of the Government, unless I mistake the situation. It's going to be all right. You see if it isn't. Here's a note for you properly censored (it ought to be fumigated as well!) I must go right back. I've sent off a dozen telegrams which are sure to catch someone who has enough influence to set the wheels going. Can you be brave a little longer?" By the time I was alone again I was quiet. Jerry's confidence of success and Phil's little note left me lighter-hearted. (I didn't know till later that he had been confined with thieves and drunken muzhiks in a cell alive with insects.) I bathed my eyes, trying not to see the dear masculine belongings on the lavatory; next I tidied my hair and put on a fresh blouse and skirt. If Phil came back, the reception committee must not be too forlornly rumpled. Once dressed, there was nothing more to do. I peeked out at my guard. If he had spoken English, or I Russian, I should have taken a chair into the hall and found comfort in his company. He wore a half-apologetic expression which I took for commiseration. Perhaps he had no evil intentions about my letters after all. I could not imagine him terrorising suspects, and, as a matter of fact, it is not this branch of the police which makes the midnight domiciliary searches, and hounds unfortunates, but the Third Section of the army. I left the door open. A maid went by with a water jug. She glanced in at me, kindly, but even kindness hurt. A soli-

tary traveller passed by to his room, ignorant of the tragedy in number 57. I heard a young man and his wife laughing in an adjacent apartment, and sprang up to close the door. Their light-heartedness smote me like a knell. This time last evening, Phil and I had been laughing together; to-night he was in the toils of the Russian police, and I was alone, alone waiting for and fearful of the news which might come any minute. I had hours ago discarded the idea of cabling home. Until we had made every effort here mothers and sisters and fathers and brothers must be spared anxiety, if possible. Then I wondered if it would be in the New York evening papers:

“St. Petersburg, Russia — Philip Houghton, European manager of a well-known corporation, was arrested here with his wife this afternoon. His friends are hopeful of freeing him immediately, but he is now in the Central Office Gaol and —” A hail from Jerry interrupted my morbid fancies. It was just quarter of twelve.

“He’s coming,” he gasped, “as soon as he finishes signing something. He says you are not to touch him until he has changed his clothes, and please will you order a bath.” He was off again. I ran to the wall handle and set the bell jangling, then began excitedly to overhaul drawers for clean undergarments. Domná’s broad face presented itself in answer to the bell.

“Pajaluista, vánna for Gospodin Houghton séichas,” I stammered in joyful confusion.

“Da, da,” she replied, standing still, “vánna?”

“Yes, yes, yes,” impatiently, “and hurry! A bath, a hot bath for the returned convict. And towels. Do you

understand?" I indicated the bathroom and pushed her down the hall.

Fifteen minutes later he came, but he put out his hands to ward me off.

"Don't, darling!" he begged. "Don't come near me, please don't. I am not fit for you to touch." In vain I protested that fleas and odours had no terrors; he was determined, and I had to content myself just hovering in the distance with a leaping heart and full eyes.

"Enter, Salvator Magnus!" declaimed Philip, as Jerry knocked. "Have you ordered the supper? I dined on sour bread and cucumbers and my appetite grows apace."

"Haste thee to the bania, my lord. The feast waits upon thy laving."

"Vale!" sang out the togaed gentleman from the threshold, with a change of linen under his arm. "I shall return 'within the hour.'"

Jerry, who had looked into the loathsome cell, thought an hour's scrubbing might not be excessive.

"But you should have seen him, Joyce, touching elbows with the rakings of the street without the lift of an eyebrow. He's a thoroughbred!"

"Only an American would have taken it that way," I said proudly, fussing over the table already laid by our delighted Dmitri. "In the same situation can't you imagine a Teuton exploding with indignation?"

"Or a Frenchman challenging the whole service?"

"Or a Spaniard apoplectic with ire?"

"Or an Englishman defying the Russian Government and contemplating a letter to *The Times*?"

I besieged him with questions. He had returned to Strelna from Viborg at half-past seven and had found

Phil's message waiting. He reached the police station in less than an hour and he had seen the chief immediately. Finally, a wire to a friend in the Department of Ways and Communications had brought that important personage at nine-forty-five, and with him the chief had gone into a prolonged sitting; Philip being sent for, he had been questioned mysteriously as to his knowledge of steel processes and armour-plate.

"Of course," said Jerry, "Phil easily explained that, but not, I was surprised to see, to his excellency's satisfaction. He sent for a detective. Phil swears it was your inquisitive cabman, minus a false beard. For at least ten minutes they jabbered in Russian, while Phil and Prince K. talked horses as unconcernedly as if they were at a club. Finally the chief turned to the Prince, an awfully good fellow, and asked in French if he would be sponsor for Phil's behaviour during the rest of your stay, to which he got an emphatic response from His Princeship. I had told him before he saw the chief that the whole affair was preposterous, that your visit to Petersburg had a far more interesting animus than spying upon the Russians, and that there was no more question of your innocence than there was of my own. As a proof of his belief in you he invited us all, right before the chief, to join a house-party at his villa near Peterhof, and to remain as his guests until you left for Moscow. That seemed to impress his excellency, and the upshot of it was Phil was practically paroled in care of Prince K. He is to send in for us to-morrow afternoon, and now you'll have a rattling good chance to prove what I have told you, that the good-class Russian is the most hospitable creature on earth."

"Oh, but a Prince, Jerry! And we've got no clothes."

"He understands all about it. You are merely tripping it, and came, like seasoned travellers, with as little baggage as possible. You never met a nicer fellow. You'll feel at home in a minute."

Of course I knew the title of a Muscovy Prince did not carry with it the prestige borne by the same title in England or Germany. Still the idea of a Russian Prince as host was romantic enough and, because I was a woman, I fell to planning immediately just how I was to amplify my lean wardrobe.

Dmitri arrayed the tempting zakuska on a side-table. He brought chicken cutlets à la Torjok under their silver cover; he dressed the salad, and uncorked a bottle of Massandra. Then, as the minutes passed and the hero of the feast did not return, the painstaking chelovék grew worried. "The wine had been chilled to *just* the right degree—and the sauce for the cutlets—Madame! Ah-h!" as Philip appeared. At the second entrance of the tragedy's chief actor his arms went about me in a long embrace. As I cried a little on his shoulder, I felt exactly like one of Repin's pictures, "The Return of the Exile." Dmitri coughed and began to rearrange the table, while Jerry almost succeeded in slipping noiselessly through the door. Phil caught at a coat-tail and drew him back.

"Just a moment! I have something to say to you, you great tawny-headed trump. Do you realise that I should still be hobnobbing with that prison rabble if you had not turned the trick for me? How do you think I am ever going to thank you?" Their handgrasp was good to see.



SELLING HOMESPUN LINEN AT A VILLAGE FAIR



"Who played the Samaritan to me, I'd like to know?" demanded Jerry. "To think," he added as at last we seated ourselves, "to think that we should never have met here, that I might have expired in the road and could not have done you this service, if you had not gone just that day to Lake Ladoga!"

"At which I am reminded of a letter post-marked Philadelphia in that pile on the stand. Do you think you can find it?" In a moment Cicely's sweetheart was eagerly going through the packet.

"Here it is! The same grey paper and dashy writing."

"Why don't you kiss it?" teased Philip, spearing a mouthful of cutlet.

"Better than that, I'll read it, with your permission, Joyce?" which he proceeded to do while we ate hungrily — I with my left hand! Finally Phil demanded a share, so Jerry began: 'If you are really going to Russia, as your card suggests, how I shall envy you. Of course you have not forgotten who is there, near Petersburg? The address is Gerard Drake, Esq., at the tenth verst stone (whatever that may mean) on the Strelna Road, Petersburg. Be sure to send him word the minute you receive this, or have Phil look him up at the Yacht Club. How strange it seems to be giving you these directions! Sometimes I think I simply cannot wait another week to see him. He is the dear —' Oh, I say, I can't go on with this part," faltered Jerry.

"Well, read it to yourself then," rallied Philip. "We know already what she and we think of you, don't we, jená?" He slipped an arm about my shoulders and drew my cheek to his. "Did it want to go straight to gaol with its husband?" he cajoled.

"Yes, or to Siberia or the Turcoman Steppes. The muzhik wife does not desert her exiled husband, why should I?"

"Silly! Did you really contemplate for one moment the dire chance that I should be deported? What's the use of being a United States citizen? We might have been given twenty-four hours to leave the country, but—" Jerry leaped from his chair.

"Oh, do listen to this! Did you know it all these hours, Joyce Houghton, and keep it from me?" He was again devouring the page before him.

"Know what?" we both implored.

"Know what?" he shouted hilariously. "Do you want to *know* what? Cicely and her mother are coming abroad in August, and I am to meet them in Poland. You were not to tell, as 'they were just going to wire me to come to the Hotel Bristol in Warsaw to meet friends.'"

"Oh, Jerry, and I let you read the letter, and now it's all spoiled!"

"I think from Jerry's face he does not agree with you," said Philip, as he ignited his cigarette at Dmitri's match-flame. "I disapprove of these feminine surprises. Anticipation is half the pleasure. Serves Cicely right." I looked at him and smiled.

"O man, thy name is inconsistency. Hast forgotten a June day at Carlin's?" Jerry looked up beseechingly.

"May I take this with me? I am going to get a room here for the night. You shall have it again in the morning." He took out his watch. It was three o'clock. People were beginning to come back from the gardens. Dawn was peeking around the edge of the curtain.

"I don't know whether to say 'Good-night' or 'Good-

morning,' but at any rate I must be off." We followed him to the door. The policeman was gone, and with him, the spectre of the day's drama.

The sun was high before we went to sleep. There were so many questions to be asked and answered, so much vain guessing as to the real reason of the arrest. We were not to hear until several weeks later the true interpretation of the chief's cryptic utterances.



Chapter VII

A HOUSE-PARTY AT PETERHOV

*O*F course we had planned from the first to see Peterhov and the gardens, going down by boat and making a day of it. As we drove in Prince K.'s carriage out the coast road to the Petersburg suburbs, we indulged in comparisons altogether favourable to our present mode of transportation. The villa at which we were to be guests was near the palace park. Its windows and balconies, curtained with flowers and vines, glimpsed the Gulf of Finland. Jerry had already explained that the Princess K. was in Switzerland with a sick baby, and that for the time, her place as hostess and chaperone was filled by the wife of an English correspondent. At the door we were so graciously welcomed that I understood at once Jerry's liking for our impromptu host. He was a man of perhaps forty, with a charming smile and an ingenuous manner which gave him the air of a fresh-hearted boy.

"Ah, Mrs. Houghton, it was good of you to accept this so unconventional invitation. If my wife had been at home — but I am sure Mr. Drake has explained," turning from me to Philip and to Jerry with both hands extended in frank cordiality. "We shall be quite informal. We Russians dislike ceremony at our datchas." I tried to say something of his great kindness to Philip and me

on the previous evening, but he protested that he had done nothing.

"My regret was for you, Madame, as well as for your husband. It was an accident, a misunderstanding. I will try to make you forget it," he said simply. Servants had appeared to take our hand baggage and to show us our sweet airy rooms overlooking the Gulf.

Mrs. Jordan, our hostess *pro tempore*, was waiting for me as I followed Philip down the stairs.

"You are Mrs. Houghton," she said brightly, holding out her hand. "We are all so sorry about last night. If my husband had only been in town he would have been so glad to have been of assistance, but you could hardly have had anyone more capable of unravelling the tangle than our host. Isn't he delightful? I am sure you think so already." She was one of those cheery little souls, with always more to say than there was time for. In a moment we were friends. We crossed the lawn to join the other guests, who were having tea in a small birch grove. Phil and the Prince came to meet us, bringing with them a very blond young Lieutenant Kizovsky: so we five made a tea-party of our own, munching pasties, drinking *chàî* and finding much to say about the brilliant weather, the warships in the Gulf, and the pleasures already planned for the week.

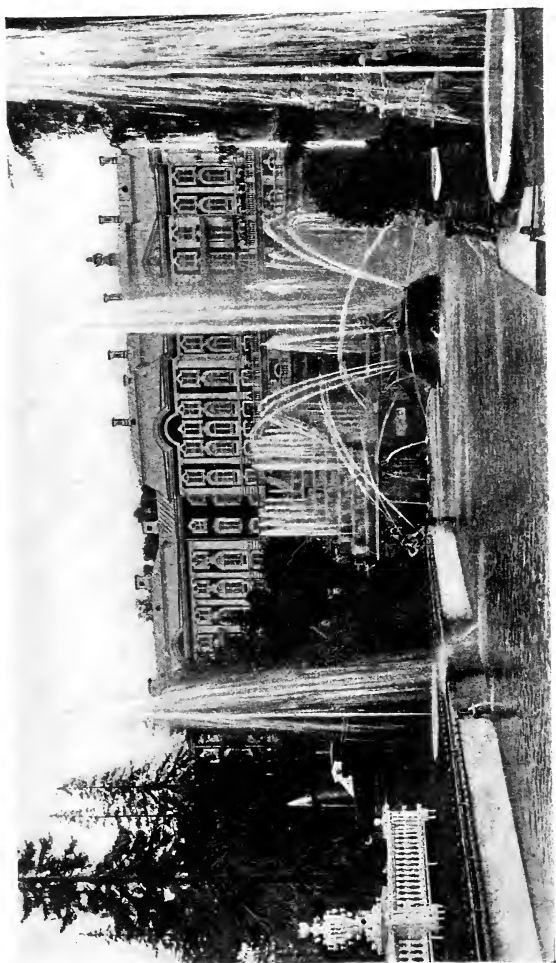
At dinner I sat at the right of the Prince. Philip took in the wife of a naval captain. As the latter sat facing me, I found myself romancing about him every time I glanced at his swart, high-bred face. While our host conversed with the extremely pretty wife of the captain, and Phil talked aeronautics and motors with a French miniaturist, my neighbour, the lieutenant, told me the

story of Sheikh-Ahary, the romantic captain. Born a Beduin, he had been reared in Damascus, and had been sent later to the Naval School at Petersburg because of his love for the sea. When he lost his heart to an admiral's daughter, their affair was vastly disapproved until her relations had seen him, a handsome youth in an ensign's uniform. Then they understood their kinswoman's love for her Beduin sweetheart, and did not refuse their consent to an early marriage. This first wife had died, and not long since he had married again, also a Russian lady. Meanwhile, his foster country had vied with other nations in heaping medals, orders and titles upon him. During the late war he had performed notable service for Russia, and at all times his rare spirit and loyalty had endeared him to the country to which he had given allegiance. As an hereditary Sheikh, or Duke, of a Beduin tribe, he was venerated in his native land, to which he frequently travelled to visit his mother, who still lived upon the family estate in Arabia. Thousands of orange and olive trees brought him yearly wealth.

"Do you not find him handsome?" asked my narrator.

"Very," I enthused, regarding his attractive features and fine brown hands. "So gentle and so strong." The lieutenant turned to the frail girl who sat at his right.

"You will like to hear these things of your father, is it not so, Liubka?" Then I remembered that this was the lieutenant's betrothed, and that she had been introduced as Mademoiselle Ahary. Her eyes were remarkable, unfathomably sweet and melancholy. Through her veins flowed the blood of a splendid race, cultured, haughty, and fine-grained. Ages ago they gave science, poetry and geography to the world. Their fame for true hos-



PETERHOV PALACE

pitality has established a metaphor: "As hospitable as an Arab." Temperate, sentimental, strong-hearted, they possess a fascination individual and unexcelled. And this young daughter of the race—I could well understand the adoration in the Russian's eyes and in the eyes of her father as he regarded her across the table. She was the sort men of her own tribe would set upon a horse and follow into battle, heartened by her war songs or consoled by her tears.

But she and Mrs. Jordan were prosaically discussing a shopping-tour for Monday, while Jerry leaned back in his chair and smiled with masculine indulgence at mention of arshins of lace and the best place for gloves.

"Would you go with us, Mrs. Houghton?" said Mlle. Ahary. "We are planning to go in early and return after luncheon in time to rest before the sail to Cronstadt." I accepted with alacrity, realising the opportunity this would afford me to make additions to my wardrobe.

The morning found the men off for a swim in the Baltic before we feminines had taken tea. Mlle. Lecrey, the portraitist, had a sitting with a Grand Duchess and we put her down at a palace door on our way to the station. Arrived at the Gostinny Dvor, we strolled from one arcaded stall to another, and up the Perspective to still more modish silver and embroidery shops. I found a darling lapis cravat pin for Philip and a steel-studded Circassian belt for myself. But my search for blouses and dresses was not so satisfactory, though we canvassed modistes' and shops until noon. After much bargaining I selected an embroidered linen and a thin blouse or so, and a dinner gown trimmed with Vologda lace. Then

we went to luncheon at the Hotel de France, where the foreign correspondents gather every day for the noon meal to discuss the newest news. We were hardly seated at a window table when a man, unmistakably American, came over to speak to Mrs. Jordan. She introduced him as Mr. Colton.

"I supposed you had gone south with your husband on that *Pall Mall* assignment," he said as he pulled out a chair. "You are such an indefatigable correspondent-ess."

"Oh, I should have *wilted* down in Malo Russie this time of year. And the dust, and the unthinkable hotels! How are the chicks?"

"As lusty as usual."

"And the wife?"

"Not so lusty as usual. The heat fags her and the baby is teething."

"Here," said Mrs. Jordan, addressing me, "you see the father of six, born severally in America, Germany and Russia, and speaking almost as many languages as there are children."

"How entertaining they must be!"

"Their parents find them so," the father added modestly.

"When may we come to see them and the Madame?" asked Mrs. Jordan, as he arose. "We are all at Prince K.'s villa. Mrs. Houghton and her husband are compatriots of yours."

"So I guessed. In fact, Jerry Drake's a friend of ours, and he spoke of you when I met him at the Admiralty the other day. If you'll do us the pleasure to have tea and muffins with us some afternoon, I'll promise

you a sight of all the little Coltons and a rare view of the Gulf." Mrs. Jordan set a day then and there. "And that precious baby," she called after him, "tell her not to smash any more Grand Ducal hearts!" Mademoiselle and I expressed our curiosity.

"I thought it was too cunning. The sixth little Colton, aged three, was out with her nurse a few days ago, walking through the palace park at Strelna. Down one of the paths came the Grand Duke Constantine and the Crown Princess of Greece. The baby, she's the *sweetest* gold-headed sprite, was careering up and down the walk and laughing like a lark. His Highness stopped and spoke to her in Russian and she lisped back something about her little fistful of posies, and held one up to him. The maid, who recognised the Tsar's uncle, was simply overcome with awe, but not so Miss Colton. In Russian, she and the Duke continued an animated conversation which ended in his kissing her, and accepting a wilted flower from her moist little hand. Wasn't it cunning?"

"*Too* cunning!" we agreed.

"Will you please tell me," I said as we walked up the Nevsky to finish our shopping, "why so many Russian maidens go about with their faces tied up in a handkerchief? Is it mumps or toothache?"

"Toothache," replied Mademoiselle Ahary. "It is a Russian malady. "I think it is because we have so cold winters and so hot summers, and few good dentists. The poorer people pray to a special saint about it."

"A touch of misery makes all akin," I exclaimed. "I once saw a little swollen-faced Japanese girl tying a prayer at the roadside shrine of a toothache god."

"Ah, you have been in Japan! And is it so very

beautiful? I do not like to think so, because they are our enemies," she confessed naïvely.

"If the country is beautiful, the people are not. I found them dishonourable, avaricious and hypocritical — brave, of course, and awfully clean, but I don't like them."

"Yes, unfortunately, very brave and very, very wise. My father has told me much."

"Do you ever go to Arabia?" I asked, as Mrs. Jordan left us to examine some linens.

"Oh, many times. My grandmother is in Damascus. She sends often for me. You would love our Arabia, and I should like you to see my father riding with his Beduins."

"And yet he loves Russia?"

"Yes, it is in Russia that he has made his career, and it is here that he married my mother."

"And now you are to marry a Russian too?" Her olive cheeks flushed prettily and she dropped her lids.

"In two months. We shall have our lune de miel under my grandmother's olive trees." She raised her eyes and touched my sleeve. "I hope we may be as happy as you."

"And why not? Russians make good husbands, and your fiancé adores you." Mrs. Jordan proved herself so expert a bargainer that we were soon on our way back to the Peterhov station.

"There is one thing I do miss dreadfully in Russia," I said, as we jolted through the glaring streets. "Do you know what three American women shoppers would consider absolutely necessary to a trip like this?"

"Tea?" they both ventured.

"No, ice cream soda."

"Oh, I've heard of that. At Fuller's in London they mix it," from Mrs. Jordan.

"At Fuller's they do indeed mix it. They also attempt it at a shop in Paris, where they put a dab of *crème glacé* in a glass of salty mineral water."

"How should it be done?" queried Mademoiselle.

"Well, the hand-maiden at Huyler's or Allegretti's would first pour into a thin glass a syrup of fruit or chocolate or coffee. Then she would spoon from a freezer a portion of ice cream, and froth it all over with sizzly soda water from a frosty fountain. And that's our national drink. Don't you like the sound of it?"

"*Like* it? I am parched for want of it!" wailed Mrs. Jordan. As our cab paused in the press of the traffic, a street-seller, mocking our thirst, thrust a bucket of salt cucumbers under our noses.

"Agurtzia, Sudarynya?" he wheedled.

"Begone with your pickles, you wretched man," protested Mrs. Jordan, putting up her hands.

"Yes, begone to *Amérique* and bring us an ice cream soda!" echoed Mademoiselle. As they belaboured him in English the pedlar stared bewildered, unable to fathom their vehemence. His crest-fallen expression as he turned away, sent us all diving into our hand-bags for kopeks, which he scrambled to catch as they rolled between the cobblestones and under the horses' feet.

"Oh, poor man!" sighed the little Ahary. "See how happy he now looks over his ten kopeks."

"Nearly as much as he would earn all day selling his tiresome cucumbers. Either he will work no more this afternoon or the surplus will go into vodka."

"Mrs. Jordan the pessimist!"

"No, just Mrs. Jordan the truth-sayer. The laziness and intemperance of her muzhiks are the brakes upon Russia's progress."

"But they are paid so little when they do work," defended Mademoiselle. "How much do you suppose this *isvostchik* receives each month from his employer?"

"Oh, not more than eight rubles, I daresay."

"Not a kopek more, and he must drive, drive all day and much of the night to earn that. Russia cannot hope to become like the rest of Europe until things are made better between her labourers and the ones who hire them."

"Well, my dear," said Mrs. Jordan briskly, as we stepped out of the drosky, "you are half Russian and ought to know better than I, but what little I have learned of *batrak* and *muzhik* has destroyed what sympathy I had for them when we came here." The little Arabian shook her head sadly.

"Ah, I am afraid there are others to blame for his bad habits besides the poor workman himself." The mild discussion ended as we sought seats in the drawling Peterhov train.

A sun-burned Philip saluted us at the station.

"The Prince said you were sure to come on this train, so I drove in with the *linega*."

"Oh, Philip!" I remonstrated, "that jaunting-car affair? Don't you think the Petersburg pavements are sufficient aids to digestion?" I climbed up beside him and disposed my boxes at our feet, while Mrs. Jordan and Mademoiselle sat back to back in the rear.

"Why were you so long?" complained my husband.

"Did you miss me?"



WHERE THE TSAR FEASTS AFTER THE CORONATION

"I don't believe you missed *me!*"

"Well, I felt as though just half of me were there, if that's missing you. There was an endless number of things I wanted you to see. Will you go in with me some day before we go, to see the provision stalls and bazaars?"

"To-morrow, if you say so."

"No, not to-morrow. It's Tsarskoë Selo to-morrow and Pavlovsk in the evening. Oh," as I caught a glimpse of a speeding boat, "do you suppose that is the Tsar's courier?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Jordan with her back to the Gulf, "if the craft is painted black and is going like the wind."

"Then the Emperor must be at Peterhov."

"The *Journal de Pétersbourg* announced that he was back from Poltava and was leaving immediately for Cowes."

We saw the royal yacht *Standart* as we steamed in our host's *Viuga* (Snow-storm) towards Cronstadt, where we were to dine with a nephew of the Prince. At the landing he met us, the drollest little fat lieutenant. In the garden of one of the military clubs he had ordered a repast over which, with music and good fellowship, we lingered until nearly eleven. Repeatedly his uncle, Prince K., protested that we had a long sail before us, but there was always a new joke to be recounted or a choice wine still untasted.

"Madame," lamented the lieutenant, seeing my full glass, "you do not find it to your palate. Aha! I remember, there is a lighter vintage in the cellar. Garçon, vite!" despite my protest. Or, "Will it be the almonds next, Mademoiselle?" or, "Another cigarette, Monsieur

le Capitain?" The limit of his purse does not bound the hospitality of the average Russian. All he has, and unfortunately sometimes more than he has, is at the disposal of his guest. A whim is a command; a preference, however slightly expressed, is sufficient to move armies.

"Oh," expostulated the lieutenant, pained at the refusal of the men to join him in another glass, "you should see how great thirst had His Highness, Prince Henry of Prussia, whom I had the honour to attend when the Russian officers entertained the German squadron at Vladivostok. Champagne, champagne, champagne — all morning, all night! I,—I do not like champagne. It is overrated insipidness. But I must be courteous. When His Highness desire champagne, so must I drink with him. Ah, but I had a sickness when that week was past!" placing a plump hand on his forehead, "a sickness here which for days made me to drink, will you believe it, mon oncle, nothing, nothing but milk?"

He was inexpressibly amusing with his protruding cheeks, and twinkly little brown eyes, his round short figure and his unquenchable joviality. I haven't a doubt that at this moment he is making someone laugh.

"If you will but do me the happiness to say that you and Monsieur will come again," he exclaimed as I expressed my enjoyment and said good-night, "then I shall believe you did not find yourself too wearied!"

The great forts on Kettle Island and the city of Cronstadt loomed still and black as we put off for Peterhov. In the bow, Philip and I watched the star-shine in the water, and were not sorry that, through apparent misfortune, we had come under the "protection" of a Russian Prince.



Chapter VIII

A MORNING IN THE ROYAL NURSERIES

THE park at Tsarskoë Selo maintains its fame as the best-kept park in existence through the labours of over six hundred men. As we motored through the immaculate grounds we saw the gardeners literally picking up petals as they fell; rearranging pebbles in the paths; clipping spears of bordering grass invisibly higher than their neighbours.

“Don’t you think,” said Philip, who was driving, “that this prim beauty calls for eau de cologne in the tank, instead of petrol? I’m sure the Tsar won’t like our smelling up his park this way.”

The merest quip met a ready laugh, for we were a very frivolous septette — an Englishwoman, a French made-moiselle, an Arabian, a Russian lieutenant, a Bavarian mine-owner, and two Americans. The villa’s host had excused himself for a day’s business in town, and Jerry had gone complaining into Esthonia. At a pavilion on a picture-pond were mourning swans which were years ago substituted for the white ones once fed by the long-dead hand of a king’s daughter. As we glided around the curves of the perfect roads, Turkish kiosks, Swiss dairy barns, Chinese pillars, doll-houses for royal babies, a bijou theatre, bridges, cascades, rockeries formed successive pictures. The imperial residence, especially beloved by the reigning family, extends along a terrace overlooking the park. Its interior is gilded and carved,

though we did not tarry long enough to see half its beauties. Guards were watching at every corner, so photographing was out of the question, though we had brought with us the adventuresome camera, which Prince K.'s influence had saved from Government ownership. There were vistas in that princely park which I should like to have imprinted upon a film.

One of Russia's renowned pianists, whom I had heard in New York, was billed to play a Chàikovsky concerto with the Pavlovsk orchestra that evening. This was enough to lure us thither, though we Houghtons were warned that the swarms of Russians we should see would not be of the "upper class." It was interesting to observe the appreciative attention given to the serious programme by the audience, which was plainly "commercial" in its aspect. Bearded and booted shopkeepers took turns holding the babies while their stout wives drank tea and applauded with enthusiasm. At the finale of the concerto, tea and babies were both forgotten in the tumult of approbation which arose.

"Imagine Chàikovsky at Coney Island!" I whispered to Phil.

A morning or so later, the household puppy and I were playing an exciting game of tag upon the lawn when Mlle. Lecrey came down the steps with a tin box under her arm. In her pretty French way she said:

"Is it perhaps that you would find pleasure to walk with me? I go to the park." I assented quickly enough and ran in to tell Phil, eating a lazy breakfast, that I should be back before long.

"And what am I to do in the meantime?"

"You are to go on draining the samovar and crunching toast until your American breakfast appetite is satisfied; then you may walk in the direction of the palace park, find your wife and bring her home through the birches. In about an hour?"

"In an hour or so."

"Well, don't fail to find me. It will be divine in the sun-spotted birch-wood this lovely morning. Good-bye."

"Good-bye, and have a good time."

"Yes, thank you. Good-bye."

Mademoiselle and I sauntered along a broad shady road, revelling in the clear air, looking out to the tranquil shining Gulf, picking some wild flowers, chatting congenially. She was expressive and interesting, and extraordinarily gifted in miniature painting. I knew that she numbered the Grand Duchess Elizabeth, widow of Sergius, among her patrons, and that her vogue at court was undisputed.

"Are you going to sketch?" I asked as we came upon a pretty forest road. "This would make a perfect water-colour."

"You are right, Madame. These woods make me think of the landscapes about Cernay near my Paris."

"Cernay-la-ville? I have coached through there. Do you know the little Hotel Avril on the little village square?"

"Ah, well, Madame! And its stone walls within covered with paintings by artist guests?"

"And the arbour at the rear, where one eats fat chicken and tender salad? And the wee shop across the way where the old lady sells sugar almonds in cornucopias?"

"Yes, yes, and the road to Chevreuse and Dampierre, and the spawning ponds of M. le Baron Rothschild, and the *so* quaint keeper with the turkey feather in his hat? Many days I have sketched in those woods."

"Where shall you sketch to-day?" We had passed the vista of road and trees, and not far ahead were the yellow walls of Peterhof.

"To-day I shall not sketch trees but four flower-faces. You shall see!" she said, smiling enigmatically. Once inside the park gates, we turned down a walk to the left. Through the trees, palace roofs showed green or gold. We crossed small streams and passed summer houses of Dutch and French design. As we approached the private grounds of the imperial residence, Mademoiselle looked at her watch.

"We have still twelve minutes," she said, sitting down beside a carp pond. "Should you much like to know where we are going and whom we shall see?"

"Immensely."

"I feared you might not come if I told you before. The Grand Duchess Elizabeth is here with her sister, the Tsaritsa. I have made of her several miniatures, and always she has desired Her Imperial Highness to sit to me. But the Empress is shy. She will not consent to be painted. The Grand Duchess Serge despairs. One day I remark the resemblance between Her Highness and the Tsaritsa. The features are almost the same. It is only the expression which differs. And then the Grand Duchess Elizabeth say to me, clapping her hands quickly, 'I know what we shall do. When next I go to stay with my sister, you shall come to see me. I will ask her to let me present you. You shall closely regard her

expression, the difference between us, and then you shall make a miniature of her by changing one of mine!’ You see? So I have been sent for to do this for my good patroness. A servant brought a message last night when we were dining. I tell your husband at déjeuner when you had gone out. He beg me to bring you. And now you shall see the Tsaritsa.”

I wore no hat and had on a tailored linen. “But I can’t see royalty in this — I can’t! I’ll wait here for you. And you knew all the time, and Phil!”

“Ah, Madame, you will come? I have used the telephone before leaving to ask of Madame la Grande Duchesse the privilege to bring you. She has sent back word by her maid-in-waiting that she will be happy to receive you. It will not be etiquette now to refuse, and wait outside the palace.”

“You ingenuous little plotter! You might at least have told me to put on a hat and gloves. And that naïve husband of mine! Well, Empresses and Grand Duchesses are human. Perhaps they won’t mind my ‘court costume.’ Am I tidy? Is my hair all blowy? I’m as excited as can be.”

Mademoiselle pulled at my cravat and gave my hair a pat.

“You look — charmante — tidy, if you like. Shall we go on?”

As we entered the private grounds I reminded the little artist of what she had said about the flower-faces.

“They are those of the four daughters of the Emperor and the Empress. Their aunt wishes me to pose them for a miniature. It will not take long to line in the grouping.”

In the red-panelled room where we waited for Mlle. Lecrey's patroness, there were pots of blooming begonias, photographs framed in silver and wood, tabourets and hassocks, wide wicker chairs, and a chintz-covered couch riotous with pink and white and red pillows. On one of them lay a furry ball, an imperial kitten! When the Grand Duchess Elizabeth entered, she gave her protégée a kiss on either cheek, and, at a word of introduction, held out a slim hand to me. She was informality itself, a gracious figure in black. Her face was marked with trouble, but was nevertheless winning and almost beautiful. For quite fifteen minutes we conversed about the bright morning, the cholera's increase, the grey kitten. She mentioned our host, who, as chamberlain to the Tsar, was much in favour with the imperial family. "Perhaps you knew that he commanded the automobile flotilla during the late war? There are some photographs here somewhere." With Mademoiselle's help she searched among a pile of books on a table shelf, and found an album marked "Photographien." Then the sister of the Empress of Russia came and sat beside me on the couch and turned over the pages of amateur prints. There was the automobile flotilla with Prince K. driving a big "six," small Grand Duchesses on their donkeys, the Tsarevitch on a velocipede, a laughing soldier, a view of the fountains playing — some cloudy prints, some light-struck, some out of focus. "My sister took many of these, and here is one of herself taken by my brother-in-law." At that moment "herself" opened the door and came in. We stood up as she crossed the room to offer us her hand in acknowledgment of her sister's introductions. She was dressed plainly, even unbecomingly, in a striped shirt-



ARRIVAL OF TSAR WITHIN THE GATES OF SAMPOSONIEVSKY CHURCH, POLTAVA



waist, with a broad German belt and a dark skirt. She wore a small sailor hat with a blue band, and white canvas shoes. Her manner gave every evidence of shyness, almost of embarrassment, as she talked with Mademoiselle about the proposed miniature of her four young daughters.

"It is Anastasie who will give you trouble," she said, laughing and looking over at her sister. "Isn't it so?"

"Yes," answered Her Highness, "but placid little Marie will make up for her restlessness, and Olga will delight in the posing."

"They have all been walking with me, but I think you will find them in the nursery by this time. You have your sketch-box? Perhaps you would like then to go up at once. I will come when I have seen my secretary, who is waiting." The Tsaritsa graciously included me in the invitation to ascend to the playroom and I was delighted to have an opportunity to see so informally the imperial youngsters whose photographs are familiar to everyone. As we went down a corridor, sounds of laughter and running feet came from a room at the end. "My nieces are in high spirits to-day," said the Grand Duchess. "They have some little cousins coming to spend the afternoon, and their father has promised to go with them for a sail. That is their greatest happiness — to be with their father," she added simply. When she opened the playroom door ten feet made a rush for her, and ten hands dragged her down. She was welcomed with shouts of joy, for she had arrived only the evening before and this was the children's first sight of their favourite aunt. When she had given them a kiss and a hug apiece, and bestowed an extra caress upon the curly-haired little boy, Her Highness presented them to Mlle.

Lecrey and to me, and they became at once well-behaved little ladies. The Tsarevitch, a stocky little figure in a white belted smock and baggy trouserlets, bashfully hung to his eldest sister's skirts and could not be induced to give us his hand, despite her cajoling. His locks almost shrouded his eyes as he shook his head and put out his lips — a dear, plump, pouty baby — heir to the Woe of Russia! The room was spacious and cheery and contained a multitude of toys and mechanical playthings. A big toboggan slide was evidently the favourite, for it was sadly scuffed and worn. Miss Eagar, the stout, kindly governess, helped to arrange her charges according to Mademoiselle's suggestions. The Heir Apparent, regaining his spirits, galloped boisterously about the great room on a stick with a horse's head, and created such a distracting commotion that he had to be suppressed. At the feet of the Grand Duchess and myself he set to playing with a train of cars which imperilled our toes. When his four sisters were posed and Mademoiselle was busy with her pencil, he climbed up on his aunt's lap and watched in silence the unusual doings. We smiled at his baby wonderment.

"I am going to ask Mlle. Lecrey to do one of him quite alone. Don't you think just his head and cherub shoulders would be pretty?"

"Adorable," I acquiesced. "How lovely the second little girl is."

"Tatiana? She is considered the beauty of the quartette. It is Olga the Clever, Tatiana the Fair, Marie the Good, and Anastasie the Terror. But they are all interesting in their own way. You should see some of Olga's drawings, and they dance beautifully."

"And speak as many languages as most educated young Russians?"

"Four, but I think they like English best. In fact, it is English which has almost become the court language. His Imperial Highness and my sister speak English together, and are quite devoted to their London papers which they receive every day."

The Empress entered unobtrusively and stood by the door while the artist continued to sketch. Occasionally, the mother found it necessary to chide the active Anastasie or to warn another small model not to lose the pose. I recalled pictures of her taken about the time she married the Emperor of All the Russias, slim and lovely, if a little melancholy in expression. Now she showed not only the rack of the years and the added melancholy they have brought, but also a matronly stoutness. "A sweet-faced German hausfrau" was my mental comment as she stood leaning against the opposite wall. Mademoiselle finished her drawing and began to put up her pencils. At a nod from their mother the little girls danced off to play in the open, their long hair flying and their cheeks pink with health.

"We go so soon on our cruise to England," the Tsaritsa was saying, "I am afraid there will not be time for another sitting until our return. Shall you be able to come again in about two weeks?" She and Mademoiselle arranged a date, and we rose to leave.

"Thank you very much for an opportunity to see your daughters and little son, Imperial Highness," I said. "Perhaps when he is older, your baby will come across the Atlantic as his great-uncle did when he was *Heir Apparent*."

"King Edward? I have heard him relate stories of his American journey. Yes, possibly my little Alexis may go too, some day. But he is only a five-year-old baby now." She patted his soft hair and drew him to her side. "Just a five-year-old baby," she repeated, sadly, I thought. Knowing his heritage, how she must yearn to keep him a baby!

In the road outside the palace grounds, Philip was walking up and down. He looked at Mademoiselle and smiled. "Did she prove tractable?"

"Yes," I answered for her, "a tractable dupe for your intrigues. But I'm not sorry. It was delightful, and a lesson in simplicity which I shall never forget. I wish you had come, too."

"I? Never! I should have been sure to bump into something walking out of the room backwards."

"Oh, but they make one forget to do that," said Mademoiselle, "do they not, Mrs. Houghton?"

"Absolutely. It would be impossible to find less ostentation in an average American household."

"And not so little in many," added Mlle. Lecrey, who had painted at Newport, and knew.

In the afternoon we went to drink tea with the Coltons at Strelna, where they had hired a modest datcha for the summer. Young voices hailed Mrs. Jordan from the tree limbs as we entered the yard.

"That family of mine!" exclaimed the mother from the door. "Couldn't you guess their ancestry?"

"Simian?" suggested Mrs. Jordan impudently as the two saluted, and I was welcomed as a countrywoman of the energetic, quick-speaking little hostess.

"Possibly, but American also. Whoever saw any but American youngsters with such a lust for climbing? I keep a roll of bandages and a bottle of arnica on every shelf, and I've memorised the telephone number of every doctor in the neighbourhood."

"But they rarely fall."

"I know it. The Russian children playing primly about, stare with mouths agape at the antics of our six. Their mothers are convinced that I haven't the first instincts of a natural parent."

"And yet they wonder why your offspring are rugged as young oxen, and their own are pale as lilies and thin as reeds. I am often sorry for the sad little things; they don't know what it means to romp like normal children. Even when they grow up and go to the University the only athletics they know are 'lorteeneece,' croquet, and 'cup and ball.' Of course they skate beautifully, and toboggan in 'Butter Week.'"

"Butter Week?"

"The week before Easter when all Russia makes a holiday. Of course during Lent they may not eat any food produced by an animal, so even butter and milk are prohibited. Before they fast, they consume all the butter their purses will afford."

"And what do they use for frying? Sunflower oil, possibly."

"Nothing else. And the seeds, you know, they eat those as we Americans eat peanuts or candy. I have seen the hulls inch-deep on the station platforms," said Mrs. Colton, as her hands moved briskly among the tea-things. A robust maid set the samovar before her, and went out.

"What a delightfully quaint 'self-boiler'!" commented Mrs. Jordan.

"I picked it up in the Apraxin Bazaar one day. I am not at all sure that I am not risking the charge of receiving stolen goods."

"That is one of the fascinations of buying there, don't you think?"

"I am afraid so. 'A legalised fence,' Mr. Colton calls it."

"It sounds too interesting to miss," I said. "May I know where it is?"

"Back of the Gostinny Dvor, where we shopped the other day," replied Mrs. Jordan. "But wait until you reach Moscow and you will find even a wickedder one. You mustn't miss it."

"I shall inquire for it the first thing. I have demanded of my husband a wedding-present in the shape of a samovar, and my heart shall henceforth be set upon discovering one which gives evidence of having been stolen!"

"Did you know," said Mrs. Jordan, "that you are this afternoon giving a cup of tea to a young person who this morning was received at Peterhov?"

"No? Delightful! Was it an awesome experience? I have never been."

"It was the antithesis of awesome," I replied, laughing. "I felt as though I had run in to make a neighbour a morning call. Is the Tsar so informal upon such occasions, do you suppose?"

"They say so. I know a little story about him you will like to hear. A lady of my acquaintance, an Englishwoman, by the way, Mrs. Jordan, went into a shoe

shop with her little boy one day, and while she sat trying on boots, a gentleman entered by a door leading from an alley-way. He had on a great coat, and a fur cap pulled well over his forehead, but as he came forward he pushed back the cap and unloosened the coat. Immediately her small boy exclaimed, none too quietly, 'Oh, mother, doesn't he look like our Prince of Wales!' His mother, seated with her back to the man, only reproved the boy for speaking so loud, and did not glance around. But the little fellow was not to be suppressed. 'It must be the Prince of Wales, mother. He is exactly like that picture we have at home.' So she turned about, and there was the gentleman standing quite near and smiling at her son. Of course the moment she looked she knew who it was, but she did not have time to call the child to her before the gentleman spoke to him. 'Shall you think it strange that I look like the Prince of Wales, if I say that he is my cousin?' 'Your cousin?' the little boy echoed. 'Then — why then you must be His Imperial Highness, and that can't be!' At that the man laughed and called the boy to him, while the mother sat like 'my son John, with one shoe off and one shoe on,' praying that her small child would not commit some terrible faux pas, for this was his first audience with royalty. The Tsar put his hand on the little fellow's shoulder and looked down gravely into his flushed face. 'And are you so interested to see the Emperor of Russia?' he said. 'Why?' 'Why — why — because you *are* the Emperor,' he stammered truthfully. 'And not because I am I, at all. Yes, that is the way it must always be, I presume. I wish sometimes,' he said, looking about quickly and finding no one listening (the salesman had been off

hunting for a certain size for my friend all this time), 'I sometimes wish I wasn't the Emperor at all. Sometimes I am so tired of being an Emperor that I would give all I have to be — well, just you, for instance. You won't tell, will you?' he said whimsically, patting the small boy's cheek. And then he went to the front of the shop and asked to be waited on. The proprietor hadn't guessed until that minute who his customer was, and had allowed him to wait while he fitted a house-maid to a pair of goloshes. My friend heard afterward that it was not unusual for the Tsar to slip out and go shopping unattended, half-disguised by his collar and big fur cap. But I don't think he does it now."

"I should think not," said Mrs. Jordan briskly. "The Reactionaries see to that now-a-days."

"If one can believe reports, the Tsar is rather the commanded than the commander. Is it so that he is a tool merely, and knows little of his kingdom's affairs?"

"Not true at all. He is the patron of the Black Hundred and the provoker of Jewish outrages. He is not brilliant, but, on the other hand, he is not the fool he is often painted. I think he is a bad man, an oppressor to the same degree that Nicholas First and some of his other illustrious ancestors were. Look what he has done to the Finlanders. And he has fooled the people about their Duma until even the muzhiks have begun to understand that their loyalty to the throne has been misplaced. He ought to be black-balled by other nations and their rulers, instead of being received with the honours which attend his appearance in foreign waters."

"Aprópòs of the English visit?" inquired Mrs. Colton, smiling at her guest's vehemence.



THE ARAB CAPTAIN



"Yes, and of the one to France, and to Germany, and to Italy. So long as Europe wears a smiling face towards him and his atrocious performances Russia will not go free. I think it is nothing less than criminal—the apathy of foreign countries in the face of the horrible suffering of this country. Europe could stop it in a moment, if it wished to. But instead, it goes on lending money to help the bankrupt Government keep the whip over the people's heads. Without money to maintain her Cossacks and other soldiers, the Tsar would be helpless, for it is only the army which frightens the muzhiks. I hope I shall live to see the arms of the Government tied and the hands of the peasants at its throat."

"Good!" cried Mr. Colton, who had been standing unseen at the outer door. "You're right, Lady Jordan. It's the thought I've been harping on in my recent despatches. When Europe puts its hand behind its back, instead of holding it out in fellowship, a new day will break for starving Russia."

"I declare," exclaimed Mrs. Colton, "you have heated me up so that I have let my tea go cold! And yours, Mrs. Houghton? Let me brew you another cup."

"If you will let the babes come in and drink a cup with us. We were promised an introduction to them, you remember, Mr. Colton?"

"Well, call them, Richard, but I know their faces are as dirty as their pinafores and trousers. And their drawing-room manners are nil. There, didn't I say so?" as the youngsters flew up the steps and embraced their father hilariously. "David, come here. Say, 'How do you do' to Mrs. Houghton and Mrs. Jordan. They have asked to see you." A straight little figure in brown

velveteen responded. A shock of yellowest hair topped a wise small face lit by a pair of very brown eyes. He put out a tree-stained fist, and said something unintelligible, at which the others laughed. "Why, David Colton, you know these ladies are not Russian. Speak to them properly." So the four-year-old tried it again, this time in German, which I could understand. But his mother was not pleased with him. "David, you remember I told you Mrs. Jordan was bringing an American lady with her. Why do you not address her in English?" Which he promptly did. I drew him onto my lap and gave him the kiss which his cunning ways had earned and which I think he would have willingly forgone, for he was very much of a boy. "I nearly tried French," he said, looking up into my face and laughing at the joke. The other children, profiting by their small brother's chiding, made their bows in best English, and after that there were no more linguistic tangles. On his mother's knee the baby drank her tiny cupful of tea with the rest.

"Are you shocked?" said Mrs. Colton.

"A little," I confessed. "Cambric tea was my beverage at that age."

"But this is weaker than the tea drunk in America or England, and it doesn't seem to do them any harm. Anyway, they love it, so I haven't the character to refuse them."

"I shouldn't have either," I conceded, looking about at the small satisfied faces up to the eyes in tea-cups. When Phil came for us in the motor-car it was almost six o'clock.

"We have stayed so long we are in positively bad

form," apologised Mrs. Jordan. "But it is your own fault — brew poor tea and be less entertaining if you would preserve yourself from future invasions."

"I am only sorry we shan't remain long enough near Petersburg to come again," I lamented, as Philip cranked the car and we climbed in. The six little Coltons stood on the doorstep below their father and mother and waved their hands as we moved off. Except for the mounted Cossacks coming down the road, I could have imagined them just a wholesome American family bidding us adieu in miles-away America.



Chapter IX

A DAY WITH MARIE

“*COME* in, Madame,” said Prince K., rising with his newspaper in his hand as I appeared at the door of the morning-room. I took the lounging chair which he pulled into a stream of sunlight, and accepted a cushion. “I am sorry I cannot offer you an English journal.”

“But you can translate me the news. I am steeped in ignorance of the world’s doings. What about the cholera? Is it better?”

“Appallingly worse. Even the precautions which our farcical Health Board does take are useless. Some of the ‘black people’ believe that the cholera is poured into the Neva by mischievous boys, or is the result of a powder sifted into the waters by the Evil One. But they are all of one mind as to what to do, or rather what not to do about it. ‘We are in God’s hands,’ they say. ‘If it is His will that we should die, we shall die.’ And meanwhile the city’s death record is increasing every day.”

“Do you suppose we are in danger from it ourselves?”

“Not if you avoid the Neva water and take care as to the cleanliness of your food wherever you go. It is a disease of filth.”

“So I have heard. What paper do you read?”

“Officially, the *Novoë Vremya*, the *New Times*.”

“We see that quoted in America more than any other Russian newspaper.”

“It is the mouthpiece of the Reactionaries. One can-

not depend upon it for it distorts the news to suit the mind of the court."

"And what do you read from preference?"

"The *Rech*, or in your language, the *Speech*. It is the organ of the Constitutional Democrats. I am a member of the Most High's entourage. But my heart is not with those who flog the people. They have souls, they are human, though the Grand Ducal party would make us believe that they are but beasts born to produce taxes."

"The Grand Ducal party?"

"It is led by the uncles and cousins of the Emperor, and by his mother, the Dowager Empress Marie."

"Sister to Queen Alexandra."

"Yes. I could wish that her influence in Russia had been as salutary as has Alexandra's in England." It amazed me to hear a Russian of his position speak so freely, and I was bold enough to say so. "It is true, Madame, that for plain-speaking hundreds of thousands of my compatriots have suffered penalties the most severe. In public I could not say what I say to you here. No one will deny, however, that among the officials of the Government, as well as in the Army and Navy, there are many who mutely sympathise with the Constitutionalists, and even with the Progressists. Unfortunately, mere sympathy works no reforms."

"I presume it would be indiscreet to ask you a frank opinion of the Tsar? I heard Mrs. Jordan express herself forcibly a day or so ago." The Prince looked grave.

"I wish I might reply with enthusiasm for His Imperial Majesty's qualities. One must not forget that

he is the progeny of a race of alcoholics and epileptics. I cannot say otherwise, though I hope I am as loyal a Russian as most. If Nicholas II is vacillating, moody, possessed at one moment by an abnormal estimate of his own importance, and at the next by a fatal lack of self-confidence, if he is more often cruel than kind, we cannot censure too bitterly. Not one male ancestor for generations back has been normal in mind or body. Certainly few have given him an estimable example as a ruler. Now his poor little son also bears the blight of his grandfathers. It is known that he is a victim of epilepsy, as is his imperial father."

"That darling little boy we saw at Peterhov? How shocking!"

Mademoiselle Ahary had come in quietly and seated herself on the wide window-ledge. Her big eyes widened with interest as we discussed further.

"It is all a question of imperial greed," she said at last. "The Grand Dukes are Russia's worst enemies. They know their incomes will cease if monarchy ceases. So the extraordinary influence they hold over the Emperor and in the Departments is used to silence the voices that cry for liberty."

"I wonder if it is true that the Tsar has a hundred palaces."

"Yes, Mrs. Houghton, over a hundred and thirty palaces, and half his subjects are existing upon not more than twenty kopeks a day."

"Ten of our cents! How can they find anything to eat with but ten cents a day?"

"Not to eat only," said our host, "but with twenty kopeks or less, they must find fire, shelter and clothes

also. Half the peasants never know satisfied hunger."

"Are you ready, dear?" said Philip from the door. Then catching sight of our faces: "What is it? Bad news? You all look so solemn."

"Yes, Monsieur, bad news of Russia," replied the Prince, motioning him to a chair and opening a fresh box of cigarettes. "Are you taking your wife away?"

"We were going into Petersburg for a last look. We must go on to Moscow in a day or so."

"Oh, not yet!" protested our host hospitably. "Your stay has just begun."

"We wish it had, don't we, Philip? It has been a perfect two weeks."

"Delightful, more delightful than we can express. But the days are slipping by and we should be back in London in September."

"Well, it would be selfish to restrain you, for Mother Russia has many things to show you."

"How do you plan to go?" asked Mademoiselle Marie from the window-seat.

"To Moscow by night express and then to Nizhni Novgorod. I must see Nizhni. I can recall geography descriptions of it which always fascinated my young mind. Do you suppose all the romance is gone from the Fair now that railroads have superseded caravans?"

"Not all the interest, at any rate," answered His Highness. "The Fair will be at its height in about a week — the middle of August. Why do you not accompany me as far as Vologda, go from there to Yaroslav by rail and thence by water to Nizhni? You can see Moscow as well upon your return."

"I haven't the faintest notion of Vologda's place on the map, but that sounds enticing enough to consider." Philip was unfolding his pocket-guide to Russia.

"Just east of us, Mr. Houghton. V-o-l-o-g-d-a — do you find it?"

"Yes, and Yaroslav is south, and — oh, this will be jolly! — it's the Volga, Joyce, which winds from Yaroslav to Nizhni."

"That decides it! To voyage down the Volga will consummate another dream of my school days."

"Then I may have the pleasure of having you as guests in my car. I am going to inspect the comparatively new line from Petersburg to Vologda. If Marie will come, and Lieutenant Kizovsky, and Mrs. Jordan and as many more as you will care to ask — Mr. Drake too, — we shall have a house-party en route. Is it 'yes,' Mademoiselle?"

"I regret, Monsieur. It would be charming, but I have promised elsewhere. And Lieutenant Kizovsky — he is ordered to his ship."

"Ah, pauvre enfant!"

"Yes, I am melancholy. I will not deny it."

"Then perhaps you will come with us for the day in Petersburg? Do come!"

"Yes, do!" urged Philip. We had grown very fond of her during our two weeks daily, almost hourly, companionship.

"I should not be in the way?"

"We should miss you if you did not come."

"Then I go instantly to find my hat."

His Highness put the limousine at our service, and in half an hour we were off on the highroad to Petersburg.



MARIE



When the chauffeur asked for instructions, we scarcely knew what to tell him.

“Let us just drive about the city and have Mademoiselle play guide.”

“We’ll have to buy her a megaphone, then,” teased Phil.

“And why?” she questioned.

“Because that is what all the guides on the Seeing-the-Sights automobiles are equipped with.” As she continued to look puzzled, I explained.

“Oh, it is a custom of America, then?”

“Yes, a new, noisy, and profitable one.”

“Very well then, I am the guide. Here,” she began, speaking like a guide, and making us laugh, “here you see the statue of Nicholas I. Upon his horse he gallops furiously. We say, ‘The fool is chasing the wise one, but St. Izaak stands between.’”

“And who is the ‘wise one’?”

“Why, Peter the Great, who sits upon another horse that rears on a rock beyond the cathedral of St. Izaak.”

“Then the Russians are not always afraid to speak their minds about their Emperors?”

“No, they have many rhymes and proverbs. Some of them are — one could not repeat them.” Philip thought this was hardly complimentary to the rulers’ morals. We came to the statue of Catherine the Great, facing the Riding-school, with the palace in which she lived upon one side, the imperial library on the other, and the Alexander theatre behind.

“There is a saying about this statue also. I will translate it if I can. ‘Before her is Sport; to her right hand, Lust; to her left, in the shadow, Learning; at the

rear, Temperament.' It was these qualities which made up her nature."

"These, and worse," I added, remembering her cruel exercise of power for evil. The people in the streets interested us and our cicerone commented upon them: "That is a Jewish rabbi, and that equipage belongs to an ambassador. Do you see the embroidered triangle on the back of the hat, and the colours of the envoy's country in front? That fine gentleman driving there—I know him. He is the French chef of Madame la Contesse M. The family are staying at Gatchina and he comes to market. There are not many meat stores in Petersburg. Everyone goes to the markets. Should you like to see them?" She spoke to the chauffeur and he turned off the Nevsky into Garden Street. We got out and strolled among the stalls. Grayling, sterlet, sturgeon, sig and soodak were displayed in the fish market, and further on, there were piles of cucumbers, melons, mushrooms, gourds and chicory, from the famous truck gardens of Rostov-not-on-the-Don, but southeast of Petersburg. Black-cock, grouse, duck and capercailzie were hanging stiffly from hooks above the game booths.

"They are frozen," I said, feeling a neck.

"Yes, and so are most of the meats you see in those other stalls. Some may have been frozen for months. These are rabchik, tree partridges. They are caught in the trees and sold by the cartload to Russian housewives."

"By the cart?" I repeated, incredulous.

"Yes, in the winter they are stored like coal in the cellars."

"But they can't be good?"

"They are — ravishing. You ate them one night at Prince K.'s. Many families have them every day, almost every meal."

"I thought those we had the other evening might be snipe," said Phil, "except that the flesh was white. As I heard a black steward on a Mississippi steamboat say of a Mallard whose wing he had just finished, 'It certainly was a tendah bird!'" After luncheon we visited shops, haughty ones on the north side of the Nevsky, humble ones at the rear of the Gostinny Dvor, or Great Bazaar. I quelled my husband's ambition to fill his pockets with trinkets of brass and gold, hand-hammered and inlaid, which fascinated him in the second-hand stores. "Don't forget Nizhni and Moscow are to come," I warned. But he could not be restrained entirely. He made us each, Mademoiselle Marie and me, a present of a gold-washed buckle formed of twin imperial eagles, and, to complete the gift, bought us each a belt length of military gilt braid. Mademoiselle loyally selected the insignia of a lieutenant and I chose the design sacred to a general.

At the Fontanka Canal we left the car to see the marvellous new church recently erected upon the spot where Alexander II met his death. There were brilliantly coloured paintings upon the outer walls. The interior was sumptuous with gems, gold and silver, mosaics, paintings and priceless marbles. "What must it have cost?" I murmured, as we came out.

"Ten millions of your dollars," replied our guide, "and every ruble was given by the Empire's subjects. Do you know what became of the amount they put into the treasury? Grand Duke Vladimir was chief of the committee, as the son of his murdered father. He stole

the twenty million rubles for his own purposes. The workmen began to complain that they had not been paid. They were patient a long time. Finally they complained louder. An investigation was made. The money was nearly all gone!"

"What happened then?"

"The secretary pretended he had stolen it."

"Why?"

"Because someone had to be blamed, and the Grand Duke Vladimir was uncle of the people's Emperor. By law the imperial family cannot be prosecuted no matter what their crime. So the secretary, for pay, went to prison for a while. When he was released he was sent to the United States with a life income of five thousand rubles a year. The Government refunded the twenty million rubles for the building of the church."

"And the Tsar's own uncle was the thief!"

"Most of the Tsar's uncles are thieves; but the dead Vladimir was a knave without a conscience. During the war our soldiers went barefoot, cold, and hungry many times because Vladimir, Serge, and Alexis put in their pockets the funds appropriated to buy stores."

"And why does Russia stand it?"

"She will not always. But now the Cossack's lash snaps over the heads of the people. When they revolt, they suffer its stripes. It takes courage."

"Have the Revolutionists helped the country?" inquired Philip.

"We try, Monsieur." Then she paled. "I — what have I said?"

"We will forget, if you wish it, my dear."

"My father and my fiancé—I cannot grieve them, and yet it is impossible to stop my ears to the cries which come from the dark."

"And which the young men and women answer."

"Yes, the students, and I—" she looked searchingly into our faces, "I can say to you, I am one of them. It would kill my father and Stefan to know. They have pledged their lives to their Emperor's service. It is my great sorrow that I cannot confide to them what lies so close to my heart."

"Why should it be treason to teach the ignorant?"

"Because the Government forbids it. Even the owners of estates may not open schools for their peasantry. Count Tolstoi's daughter was ordered to close the class she held for the muzhik children from her father's village. Every summer the students from the Universities go among the villages and harvest fields, and tell the peasants what they have a right to know. Sometimes they dress as harvest-hands and labourers. Always they must go in secret and often, even then, they are suspected and arrested."

"And then?"

"Exiled or imprisoned—or perhaps hung, according to the mood of the District police." We were whirling along the boulevards among the islands. As we passed a pretentious villa, a carriage swept out of the gateway and passed close to us. A pompous individual raised his hat, in response to Mademoiselle's bow.

"It is General B.," she explained. "He is father to my great friend Natalia. It is with her I go into the country this week to visit at her cousin's estate near

Vitebsk. From there we shall go disguised as field hands and talk with the women as we cut grain by their side." I glanced at the small hand within mine.

"It looks scarcely large enough to wield a scythe," I said smiling.

"Often last summer my back ached sorely, but it is the only way we can reach the muzhiks unsuspected."

"So it was for this that you declined the Prince's invitation?" said Philip admiringly.

"You remember what I said to you, Phil, our first evening at Peterhov?"

"You said, 'That little Ahary would ride into battle on a charger for a righteous cause.'"

"As Arabian women do," she added simply.

"And as Russian women are doing — risking freedom and life, and something more sacred, to help right the muzhiks' wrongs."

"I wonder," as we turned at "the Point" and started back to the city, "whether you would do for me a very great service. You are going to Moscow. I want to send a letter there and some money to one of our party. She is in communication with exiles who have gone to Siberia. I cannot write her direct for she is watched."

"You would give us her address?"

"Oh, yes, but you would be sure not to allow anyone to know that you had a letter from me to her? It might mean exile to us both."

"We should regard it as a sacred mission," I said, thrilling with the idea.

"Before you go I will tell you where to find her and what to say when you meet her so she will understand."

"Shall we by any chance be a link in the Underground

Railway I have read about?" Philip's eyes sparkled with interest.

"Yes. It is called so because the Revolutionists communicate by word of mouth and from hand to hand messages and supplies which it would be unsafe to send otherwise to unfortunates."

"Who are the 'unfortunates'?"

"Convicts, usually those sent into exile."

We drew near the entrance of the Summer Garden, and Mademoiselle directed the driver to turn in there. "Have you seen the statue here to old 'Grandpa Krylov'?"

"The fable-maker? We saw his grave in the Alexander Monastery cemetery."

"This is one of the very few monuments erected in Russia to other than Emperors or officers. Literary geniuses are not often honoured in this country."

"More often exiled, I should think," said Philip.

"Krylov wrote a fable about that. I will say it to you. We all know Krylov by heart." We had alighted before the statue of the Russian *Æsop*. So we sat down on an iron bench, and listened as our little friend stood before us and began in her low voice to say the fable of "The Cat and the Nightingale":

"A cat which had caught a nightingale, stuck its claws into the poor bird, and pressing it lovingly said, 'Dear nightingale, my soul! I hear you are everywhere renowned for song, and that you are considered equal to the finest singers. My gossip, the fox, tells me that your voice is so sonorous and wonderful that at the sound of your entrancing songs, all the shepherds and

shepherdesses go out of their wits. I have greatly desired to hear you — don't tremble so, and don't be obstinate, my dear: never fear; I haven't the least wish to eat you. Only sing me something; then I will give you your liberty and release you to wander through the woods and forests. I don't yield to you in love for music. I often purr myself to sleep." Meanwhile our poor nightingale scarcely breathed under the cat's claws. "Well, why don't you begin?" continued the cat. "Sing away dear, however little it may be." But our songster didn't sing; only uttered a shrill cry. "What! Is it with that you have entranced the forest?" mockingly asked the cat. "Where is the clearness, the strength, of which everyone talks incessantly? Such a squeaking I am tired of hearing from my kittens. No. I see that you haven't the least skill in song. Let's see how you will taste between my teeth." And it ate up the singer, bones and all."

"The Government is of course the cat, and the nightingale is Puschkin or Lermontov, Gogol or Dostoievsky," Philip remarked as she finished.

"Tell us another," I begged. "What do those bas reliefs mean about the base?"

"They illustrate some of the favourite fables. 'Fortune and the Beggar' is one, 'The Muzhik and the Fish-soup' another. There is one which applies to the present condition of party politics in our country to-day, only the Nationalists, the Cadets, the Progressists, the Octobrists, the Reactionaries do not work in even so much harmony as the creatures of the fable." She stood with Krylov looking down upon her, as she traced the fantastic figures circling the pedestal.



MARKET DAY AT VOLOGDA



"The Swan, the Pike and the Crab," she announced, making us a tiny mock bow.

"When partners will not agree, their affair will not work smoothly,

And torment, not business, will be the outcome.

Once on a time, the Swan, the Crab and the Pike

Did undertake to haul a loaded cart,

And all three hitched themselves thereto;

They strained every nerve, but still the cart budged not.

And yet the load seemed very light for them;

But towards the clouds the Swan did soar,

Backwards the Crab did march,

While the Pike made for the stream.

Which of them was wrong, which right, it is not our place to judge.

Only, the cart doth stand there still.'"

"A charming expositor," we both agreed. "And what a shrewd old man he must have been!"

"He taught political lessons in his fables, for which any other man would have been hanged. The court delighted in him as well as the common folk. He was even made librarian of the Imperial Library under Nicholas I. His poems have been translated into twenty languages. He wrote in rhyme, you know." We wandered about the gardens until it was time to go back to Peterhof. The few children playing there were attended by stout nurses wearing caps shaped like coronets.

"Some wear blue ribbons and some pink, do you see?"

"Yes. Why?"

"Blue, if their charge is a boy; pink, if it is a girl."

"And if there are twins?" Of course it was Philip who propounded this. "Plaid, I suppose," answering his own question.

Speeding out the coast road we joined a procession of conveyances bearing the business men of the capital to their summer homes. Phil suggested that we stop at Jerry's lodgings to see if he had come back. As we turned in the gate, there was Jerry himself walking quickly down the drive.

"Whither, my lad!" hailed my husband.

"Ahoy there! I was just starting over to find you and invite myself to dine." He wrung our hands in his brawny ones. "By George, I'm starved to see you all! Torjok may make good bricks and grilled chicken, but for fellowship, commend me rather to a country graveyard!"

"Jump in!" commanded Phil. "The motor is restless. Why do your pockets bulge?"

"And jingle?" queried Marie. Jerry looked confused.

"Never mind, Jerry; tell me," I consoled.

"Well, it's for you that they do bulge and jingle," he confessed as he drew from one hip-pocket a fetching pair of slippers worked in silver tinsel, and from the other, a string of small bells.

"Oh, you dear Jerry! For me?" I held up the slippers of dark red Russia leather, and tinkled the chimes.

"The shoes are from Torjok, and the bells from Valdai. Please keep them as reminders of happy days in Russia."

"True reminders of Russia," said Mademoiselle, "for the slippers are of leather tanned and embroidered by Russian fingers, and these bells I know are those famous ones made in the Hills. They put them on the sledge harness and the sound is entrancing." Jerry was fumbling in an inner pocket.

"This is yours, Mademoiselle Marie, if you will be so good as to accept it with my best wishes. I may not be here when you are married."

"Oh," said Mademoiselle with a little cry as she lifted the velvet box cover. "You have chosen it for me — my name ikon — the Mother of God. Oh, you are good!" she exclaimed, extending her hand to him as she kissed the holy picture. All but the face and hands was covered with silver-gilt, and the whole was framed in a border of seed pearls.

"It is an old one," said Jerry. "I found it in a curio shop."

"Yes, I know," assented she, "for I can see painting under the silver also. The modern ikons have only the face and hands painted. It is rare, it is beautiful. I cannot thank you enough. I am glad Stefan has not yet left, for now I can show it to him."

"And what did you get for Cicely? Something pretty, I know."

"Do you want to see it? I thought you might, so I brought it along."

"Well, by Jove! What have we here? A human treasure-trove?"

"Be quiet, Philip."

"He is jealous," said Mademoiselle.

"Not at all. I wouldn't wear the slippers and I

shouldn't know how to pray to Mademoiselle's pretty ikon."

"You can have the bells. I'll buy you a cap."

"Jerry, can't Joyce and Mademoiselle Ahary stop teasing me?"

Jerry leaned over and whispered something in my ear. "No? Honest? What a joke!"

"That's not fair, either. Come here, Miss Marie, I have something of distracting importance to state privately to you." Marie did as she was bid, laughing at Phil's prankishness. Then she sat up blushing as he declared in a loud whisper, "We think Lieutenant Stefan Kizovsky is the luckiest man in Russia."

"Oh, Philip, you are incorrigible."

"Well, don't we?"

"Of course. We agreed on that days ago. But you mustn't embarrass people."

"I like to see her blush. It makes her even prettier." I gave him up.

"Look at this exquisite necklet. Won't it be lovely on Cicely?"

It was of filigree gold, hung with slender pendants, enamelled in glowing garnet. Alternating with the pendants were pear-shaped pearls. Philip took it gingerly and held it against my blouse. "Wouldn't it be lovely on *you*? Why didn't you get two of them, old man, so I could give one to my sweetheart?"

"There isn't another in Russia like it. It was made for a princess or a queen — or something," Jerry ended lamely. "I bought it from a funny old codger, who had a sort of museum in Pskov — everything imaginable jumbled together. I didn't give half what it is worth."

"And whatever it is worth, it isn't half good enough for your princess, or queen — or something, eh, Jerry?"

"Not a third good enough," maintained Jerry bravely.

I left the two boys in our room before dinner and went down to sit with Mrs. Jordan and our host on the lawn. Happy, the pup, jumped in my lap and settled herself for a nap directly I sat down. "Her affections are quite weaned from the rest of us who were her friends," Mrs. Jordan complained.

"We have grown to be great chums, haven't we, Happy?" I said, stroking the soft white head and the black-spotted ears. "It will break my heart to say good-bye to her, as I must day after to-morrow."

"Not necessarily," said Prince K., smiling. "We can take her with us on the car to Vologda."

"Really? That will be fun. Do you hear, puppy dog, you are going for a journey?" I pulled her up and looked into her dark eyes, but she just grunted and struggled back into the round ball I had uncurled.

"I am afraid she makes a convenience of you."

"She has learned by this time that I am a willing slave. How do you say Happy in Russian?"

"Chastlevey. Can you pronounce it? A soft ch as in church."

"Chast-lev-ey. Is that right? But 'Happy' goes better. I named her that, didn't I? She has such a sunny dog-disposition. It suits her."

The man-servant appeared to say that dinner was served, and we went in.

"Where are our two young men?" inquired His High-

ness, as we found our places. Outside on the stairs, we heard them laughing over some joke. When they entered the dining-room, we laughed, too. They were arrayed in full native attire, top boots, blouse, baggy trousers and all. Being muzhiks, they fell very properly upon their knees before the Prince, and made a show of kissing his hand. But His Highness graciously bade them arise and eat, which we thought most democratic. Philip's shirt was gay with embroidery, done in bright blues and reds. It was this that Jerry had told me about, when he whispered in the car. He had the bundle stowed in his suit case, but he hadn't confided in me the plan of dressing for dinner.

We had music in the drawing-room that evening and a happy time all around. When we said good-night, we were depressed by the thought that our house-party was breaking up on the morrow. The lieutenant was off for a cruise. Marie was leaving for her friend's house in the Islands — each departing on their country's service according to their conception of patriotism. Mrs. Jordan was going to join her husband on his return from Little Russia. Mademoiselle Lecrey had already gone into the country to sketch. We felt that we were parting from old friends, as we shook hands at the top of the stairs and went to our bed-chamber. "This blessed camera," I said as I picked it up from the table. "We have much to thank it for."



Chapter X

DOWN THE VOLGA TO NIZHNI NOVGOROD

A *BALDWIN* engine pulled the Prince's private car out of Petersburg. From the rear platform we said farewell to the Russian capital. Jerry waved forlornly from the station. "It is too bad he could not have come with us," said our host. "A charming young fellow."

"A dear," I corroborated.

"A trump," Philip agreed heartily. I held up the puppy and vigorously waved a paw. But Jerry did not smile. "I believe he is home-sick."

"I know he is, home-sick for the country we represent and a girl in one of its towns." It was raining drearily as the "Prince's Special" moved out across lush fields, unplanted and unploughed. Herds of thin cattle browsed among scrawny beet and turnip plants. Blocks of peat strung on poles to dry, trailed the track. At each crossing a peasant in bast shoes and ragged clothing stood signalling with a green flag that the section of track for which he or she was responsible was clear of blockades.

"What compensation do they receive for their services?" I asked the Prince.

"Nothing," he replied. "It is not right. The Government owns and controls the railways. The Government requires this service day and night, in fair or inclement weather. They should be paid something, but they are not."

Bleak pine forests and squat villages succeeded each other in dismal procession. At a small station where we stopped while wood and water were taken on, tow-headed children ran to us, offering bunches of flowers and wild strawberries for sale. Philip bought two tall measures of the berries for ten cents. They must have taken hours to pick. "Give them a little more," I whispered. So he presented five kopeks apiece to the delighted group, which followed us down the apology for a village street. A bulbous church tower surrounded, in orthodox fashion, by four smaller bulbs, terminated the view before us. On either side of the waste of mud and filth were log houses, put together with straw and clay. Nearly every window was brightened by clean white curtains, and a geranium plant. This is due, the Prince told us later, more to an absorbing love for cheer and gay colours than to neatness, for inside, the huts are rarely models of cleanliness. His Highness strolled down to join us, while our engine and car waited on a siding for the local which was due. "I know a man in this sélo," he said. "He once worked for me as a herder on my estate south of here. I think this is his izba," he added, when he inquired of one of the children. "Should you like to go in?" He knocked at the heavy door. It was opened by a young woman with a baby in her arms and another hanging to her dress. When she saw who it was who had knocked, she set the baby down on the dirt floor, tumbling over the two-year-old as she ran to find a seat for the Barin and his companions. Then she called excitedly out the rear door leading into the cattle-yard for her husband, who came in immediately when he

heard who was there. Their demonstration of delight at seeing their former employer was affecting.

For some minutes they stood answering his questions, and displaying the doubtful charms of their youngest offspring. Then the wife brought the blazing charcoal for the samovar, and brewed tea, broken off from a compressed brick. The baby's crib hung from the ceiling by a spiral spring, like a big bird-cage. On the right hand corner wall was the ikon, dimly illuminated by a sputtering candle. Around the wall was a narrow bench. There was no bed visible, and this was their one room. "Where do you suppose they sleep?" I whispered to Phil. "On the floor," was his guess. I raised my eyes to the top of the whitewashed stove, which absorbed a third of the room's space, and saw two bleary eyes staring down at us. It did give me a start, as I confided to Phil afterwards. Then I recalled Mademoiselle Marie's description of a typical muzhik hut, and knew that the bleary eyes probably belonged to the patriarch of the family, who because of his age was allotted the top of the oven for a bedroom. He was doubtless sleeping off a vodka rout, and we had awakened him. As the baby began to fret, the mother handed it up to the grandparent, who received it as a matter of course, and made a worthy attempt to silence it. As he was unsuccessful, the mother went for the nursing bottle and handed that up also. It was a cow's horn with a cow's teat tied over the end!

A very dirty pig looked in the back door and grunted. Happy was for chasing him off, but in consideration of the pig's right of priority I restrained her. Some hens

strolled in from the malodorous slough of the cow-yard to peck at the crumbs which had fallen from our thick slices of sour black bread. As we arose to leave the wretched abode, Prince K. tucked a ten-ruble note under a leg of the samovar, unseen by the mother and father. It was pleasant to imagine their surprised joy when they found it there. The arched gate leading to the street was carved and painted as elaborately as a totem pole. As we took our way back to the station, we passed similar gateposts, portraying the artistic tastes of the householders. The wooden dugas over the horses' necks were trimmed with artificial flowers and gilded. "On saints' days," said the Prince, "they often tie holy pictures to the dugas, and more flowers and ribbons." We picked our way around a drunken man who had fallen in the road. The drizzling rain spattered his face and drenched his rags, but he had drained too deeply the vodka bottle to be disturbed by mere water. Others passed him, but no one gave more than a glance to their fellow townsman in the mire.

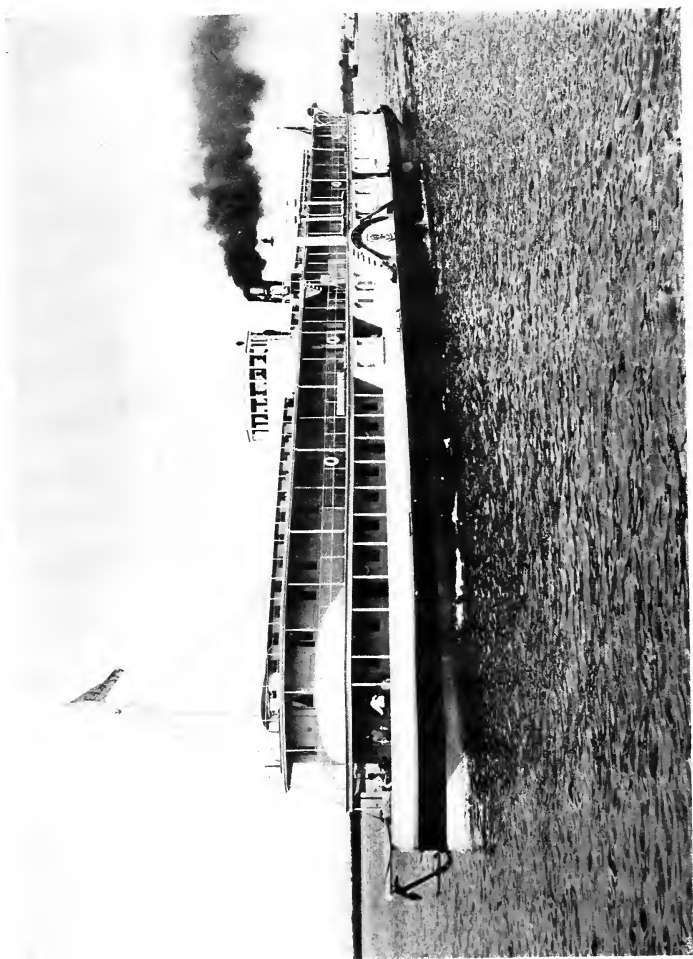
"Won't they help him at all?" I asked, rather worried to look back and see him still lying there, splashed by the mud of passing wheels.

"Oh, his wife may happen by after awhile and treat him to a beating," said our host, laughing. "His state is not so exceptional with the muzhiks that it creates any special interest or sympathy. They are the worst drunkards in the world."

"And the Government reaps the benefit."

"I suppose that does seem shocking to you?"

"It is scarcely consistent with the 'paternal attitude' assumed."



A STEAMER ON THE VOLGA

"I am afraid Russia is a bad parent in many ways. She doesn't do much to set her children's feet in the right path."

"Doesn't she do more to deflect them from the right path?"

The candles on the dinner-table shone cheerily through the car windows and the meal which the cook sent out from the tiny kitchen did much to dispel the gloom of our dismal excursion. The tardy night fell about us at last, and emerald fields and squalid villages passed in a rainy blur of darkness.

Morning found us in the station at Vologda. On the breakfast-table were bunches of yellow flowers like prim-roses, and a note from Prince K., who was already off to an interview and who begged that we do him the honour to remain his guests on the car until night when we should leave for Yaroslav. The sun was making a valiant struggle to dry up the puddles in the streets—such streets! "They must have been laid when the town was founded," remarked Phil in disgust, as we started out with Happy under my arm to see what there was to be seen. "The town," I said, reading from the guide-book, "was founded eight hundred years ago. It is best known as a place of banishment for political offenders."

"What political offence could merit a sentence to live in this place? It's the meanest looking town I ever saw."

"You have never been in Russia before. I understand that the city has important manufactories of soap, cordage and potash, and its tallow candles are much in demand in Great Russia."

“Interesting!”

“The old highroad to Siberia leads through the town. Think of the weary feet that have tramped these cobblestones!”

“My feet are weary now. Let’s go back to the car.” But I persuaded him to continue a little further along the melancholy streets lined with sad-coloured buildings, nearly all of wood. Once a plank gave way in the sidewalk and I went through the hole up to my knee. A goro-dovoy came running to see if I was hurt, but I waved him off and insisted upon limping on again. The gutters were grey with sewage, flowing sluggishly to the river, which supplies drinking-water to the thirty-five thousand inhabitants.

In the open space which marked the centre of the city, there was a market. The women were nearly all bare-footed. Some of them had their white-topped boots under their arms. They were finely built, pleasant faced creatures and looked capable of accomplishing any amount of manual labour. Their faces were stamped, too, with something finer—a fortitude which might carry them through the gravest distress.

“I know a poem about them,” said Philip.

“Why, Philip, how can you know any poems about women ’way up here in Northern Russia?”

“Well, I do,” he persisted. “It’s from Nekrassov’s epic of the Russian people, ‘Red-nosed Frost.’ I memorised part of it at college once, and I always liked it.”

“Very well, you may say it then,” I consented, amused at Philip in the rôle of declaimer. We strolled over to the stalls and stood watching the women as they poured

out milk from rude cans and sold cabbages and water-melons.

“Such women, calm and dignified of face,
May still in Russian villages be seen,
Who in their movements show both strength and race
And boast the glance and carriage of a queen.
She bears both cold and hunger patiently,
With even temper and forbearance mild.
How oft I’ve watched her mow, surprised to see
Such sweep of arm — such mighty hay-cocks piled!
No horseman can contend with her at play;
Her brave heart brings salvation in hard days.
’Twas she who chased and caught the runaway,
And walked into the cottage all ablaze.”

“Beautiful.”

“I thought you would like it. When I learned that part I didn’t suppose I should ever recite it to you here in Vologda.”

“Within an arm-length of the very women it describes.”

The shop-signs we found very diverting. In Petersburg we had seen some, but the populace is not so illiterate as in these communities far from the large cities. There, one in fifteen, can read! Here in the provinces, reading and writing are occult sciences to the majority of the population. Therefore the necessity for pictorial representation of merchandise is all the more obvious. We passed a furniture store. Like other passersby, we knew it was a furniture store because signs ten feet high presented hand-paintings of mattresses, and chairs, and hat-racks. Next door, more or less appetising pictures of game cheeses, pickles and caviar, proclaimed a deli-

catessen store. Every sort of bread and roll known to the baker was depicted upon an adjacent sign-board.

"I can't say much for the art of it," said Phil, "but they certainly are realistic enough."

"Yes, I think the Barbizon school has not many followers among Russian sign-painters. Look over there at that dairy store sign. See how pleasantly the milkmaid smiles as the new milk streams into the bright tin pail."

"And the cheese — am I mistaken, or do I *really* see it move?"

When we had exhausted the scanty sights of the town, we went back to the car, avoiding the muddy lakes by leaping agilely from one cobblestone to another. "I should think the game of hop scotch should prove popular in this country. Watch me negotiate this puddle."

"Watch yourself that you don't fall in and drown," I warned. Phil poised himself with manly grace upon the pinnacle of a grandfather cobblestone and prepared to jump. "One, two, thr — There you go! Pride before a fall." Up to his ankles poor Philip was wading out of a chocolate pool. "Don't say it!" I called, stretching out a hand to him from my vantage point. "This is one of those moments when the exercise of self-control earns an extra bright star in your crown. Take my hand, I'll pull you in to shore." I leaned towards him — my foot slid down the rounded side of my pedestal — I lurched — and caught myself — and lurched again — and promptly sat down in another brown puddle. "Oh, I say!" exclaimed my husband, struggling to my aid, "it's just too bad. And you were trying to help me! Wait a moment, I'll be there." He lifted me out

and set me upon a dry stone, where we stood trying to balance ourselves while we decided as to the next leap to safety. At that moment a drosky came rattling down the road and Prince K. shouted to us: "Oh, Monsieur and Madame, I will come. Wait — wait —" He spoke sharply to his *isvostchik*, and then to our immense relief the vehicle was drawn up to our side and we were rescued. I was struggling between a laugh and a foolish cry. My dress was ruined. My shoes were dripping with mud and slime. "What shall I do?" I wailed. "Do?" said our kind-hearted host, while Philip tried to remove some of the stains from my blouse. "We shall unstrap your baggage and in one moment you shall be in fresh clothing while my man will run quickly to a laundress and have this garment made clean before your train leaves."

"Isn't it fortunate that it is made of linen instead of tweed?" I said, trying to be an optimist. "But, Philip — your shoes — can you ever get them clean?"

"Klim shall attend to all that," assured the Prince. "You shall see! I am more sorry than I can say, but in an hour, I promise you, you will have forgotten it." And in an hour we did find ourselves freshly apparelled, and laughing over our adventure in the streets of the province of Vologda. My clothes came back from the capable hands of a laundress just in time for us to drive to the train. The Prince insisted upon going with us to see us settled in the car. "May I take the puppy, too?" I begged. "She wants to see us off."

The Prince looked at Phil and they both smiled. "The puppy is yours, Mrs. Houghton, if you wish her."

"Mine?" I cried, catching her up. "You don't mean

really that you have given her to me? To take back to London?"

"If you want her."

"I want her more than any puppy dog I ever saw or ever shall see. Oh, Happy, Happy, you and I are not going to be separated after all, and we shall take you everywhere we go." I clapped my hands and she caught at my ankles and commenced to shake my skirt to demonstrate her delight. "But she shall always be a Russian dog," I said, holding out my hand to the donor. "I shall not allow her to forsake the nationality of her former master. And we will send you all the pictures we take of her wherever we go, so you can't forget her." At the station we had barely time to secure our tickets and find our places before the train moved out. As we were allowed only thirty-six pounds of baggage on each ticket, there was a fee to be paid on our trunks. Our hand baggage was stored overhead in the broad racks. Our "platz karte" called for seats in a first-class compartment, and as we were alone, we were assured a comfortable night, so we thought. We had said good-bye to our charming host with the greatest reluctance. We shall not soon again meet another like him. As Philip shook hands with him out the car window for the last time, the Prince handed him a letter bearing a Moscow address. "I had almost forgotten," he said as the wheels moved; "it will introduce you to my very good friend in Moscow who is president of a bridge-building company. You may like to see how they carry on a big business in this country. I have already written him that you will be in Moscow in about ten days. Good-bye, good-bye, I shall hope to hear that you have had the

pleasantest of journeys!" We leaned out the window and waved as long as we could see his fine figure upon the platform. Then we wound about a curve and he disappeared from our sight. "But never from our hearts," said Phil, moved to sentiment.

A conductor pushed back the sliding door of the compartment and called for our tickets. He wore a black uniform with magenta trimmings and a cap with a magenta top. The long coat was buttoned diagonally and was neatly belted. From a chain hung a whistle and two small tubes which looked like old-fashioned telescope fans. He was accompanied by an attendant who carried a note-book and kept a check, apparently, upon the conductor's collections. Otherwise, I presume the master conductor would steal *all* the fares. He charged us a fee for Happy, but made no objection to our keeping her in the car with us. When he had gone out, a waiter from the buffet appeared, and presented us with a bill of fare printed in Russian. As he spoke German we were able to find out what he wished us to do with it, and consequently ordered a dinner to be brought to us in the compartment. It was a very good dinner. We paid three rubles apiece for it and we were not overcharged. The distance to Yaroslav is one hundred and thirty miles. We were informed that we should travel it in about ten hours. But time was of little consequence to us as we were sure to have to wait at Yaroslav for the Volga steamer, the Prince had said. The long twilight enabled us to see the passing sights until after ten o'clock, but the "sights" consisted mainly of marsh and prairie and pine woods. Griazorets, the first stop of any importance, presented a particularly doleful appearance.

It seemed to be completely surrounded by a bog. "It should be named mud," said Phil to me, as we leaned out the window watching the crowd upon the station platform.

An officer immediately below us looked up and laughed. "It is, sir."

"Is what, if you please?"

"Is named 'mud.' Griazorets means a marsh."

"Well, that was a good guess."

"Many other towns in Russia might be similarly named."

"I don't doubt that. Do you know Vologda?"

"Very well, but it is well paved in comparison to many other cities and villages."

"Then I should expect to drown in a worse town," and Phil related our morning's experience.

"That was unfortunate, but it often happens. In spring there are no roads, none at all in the country. The peasants are really prisoners because the so-called roads are too muddy to travel upon."

A beggar with a long beard, and with his legs bound in filthy burlap fell at the officer's feet and kissed his coat. "For Christ's sake," he asked alms. The officer pushed him away and threw him a silver piece. Two or three priests and swarms of soldiers and officers paced the platform, far outnumbering the civilians. The soldiers wore brass and leather scabbards and sabres with the edge up. As they waited the train's departure cigarettes were smoked and wee glasses of vodka were tossed off at the station restaurant bar, where many Russian delicacies were on sale.

After an apparently purposeless delay, the conductor



RUSSIAN FARMERS

pulled out one of the little tubes, which became a green flag. The station gong had already sounded twice, and had been answered shrilly by the impatient engine. When the green flag was waved we started, the male passengers entraining leisurely and settling into their seats with a sigh. We had paid at the rate of about two cents and a half a mile for our first-class accommodation, as comfortable as any in Europe, but this did not include bed-linen, or towels and soap. For sheets and pillow-cases we feed the porter. We had taken the precaution to provide ourselves with towels. Time after time during the night we were awakened by the conductor coming in to examine our tickets. So small a convenience as a receipt check seemed unknown. The corridor outside was lighted by a single candle enclosed in a square-sided lantern. "No wonder it takes so long to get there," Phil murmured sleepily, as we stopped for the eleventh time and waited at least twenty minutes. But if Russian railways are not rushing railways, they are at least punctual ones. We steamed into Yaroslav almost on the minute scheduled in our *Spytunk po Rus-sie*, or Time-table for Russia.

Putting up at the excellent Hotel Kokúef, we spent all that day and part of the next wandering about the old town, one of the oldest in all Russia. Its inhabitants defended themselves against Tatar invasion. In its monastery once lived the original Romanov, Tsar Michael, grandfather to Peter the Great. From the hotel proprietor, a rotund and talkative Baltic Russian who spoke German as a matter of course, as well as indifferent English, we learned the following facts about Yaroslav, both province and city.

The province shares with those of Vladimir and Moscow the commercial supremacy of Russia.

Its artisans make the best linen, the best samovars.

Its carpenters have a national reputation.

Likewise its cows.

Its inhabitants are as keen as Scotchmen — or Jews, in trade.

They are especially proud of their pure Great Russian blood, a mixture of Finnish and Slav.

In the capital city the first Russian actor acted upon the first Russian stage. His name was Theodore Volkov and the year, 1750. The stage was set in a leather warehouse, and upon it Volkov's illustrious career had its beginning.

Yaroslav is the Hartford of Russia. It has twenty millionaires, and many of them have made their fortunes out of iron, which, with cotton, tobacco and linen manufacture, is the most important commerce of the city.

One cotton mill gives employment to over twenty thousand men.

It has seventy-six churches.

"If you should go out to the village of Kodlov," he said, "you would find native peasants who could talk with you in your own tongue. They are the descendants of Cronstadt dock-hands and learned to speak English from working with British sailors unloading ships at the gate of Petersburg. They speak French and German, too. I think you would laugh to hear them, Russian muzhiks talking French." We thought we would! We walked, at our landlord's suggestion, along the park-like boulevard which borders the Volga. Venders of highly varnished wooden bowls and spoons, hand-carved toys,

and jack-knives pestered us at every other step. One man proved so excellent a salesman that Phil went away with his pockets full. One of his purchases quite fascinated me. It consisted of a "nest" of wooden dolls, made hollow of course, with tops which came off. They were painted, by peasants undoubtedly, and were shiny with varnish. They had matronly faces with very pink cheeks. The tallest stood three inches high; the smallest, about half an inch. Eight in a nest cost an American quarter, and they were hand-painted!

Some time before the boat was due from Tver, we drove to the long quay which extends up the river for two miles. "What sort of a boat do you suppose it will be?" said Philip, as we walked up and down before the booking office, with Happy romping alongside. "Something primitive and impossible, probably."

"Whatever it is, or whatever the conditions are, I am determined to enjoy it. I have an idea that is a family of Tatars over there."

"Going down the river, probably, to one of those Tatar settlements. The women aren't bad-looking." They had bright, dark eyes, and less irregular features than the men, walking about in belted brown blouses and calico skull caps. Their eyes were oblique, their cheek bones high, their noses concave, their lips thick, and their skin yellow. One of them carried a small fat baby. When it cried, he set it down by the young mother who was making very pretty lace. I could not resist taking a picture of it—a chubby Tatar cherub, with its round face tied up in a flowered kerchief. The mother smiled engagingly at us. She had on a dark cotton Mother Hubbard, and a cap of Tam O'Shanter persuasion, enlivened by a band

of gaudy embroidery. Over her chest she wore a sheep-skin plastron which jingled with rows of brass discs. Philip thought they might be medals for life-saving or sharp-shooting, but I opined that they were worn merely as ornaments to satisfy a Tatar love of dress. Happy ambled up to the baby and it stretched out its little hand and cooed like — any other baby.

When the steamer hove in sight there was the usual scramble to get on board. As we were sure of our reservations, we stood back and watched the ship's company pass up the gang-plank. There were petty merchants carrying wares to Nizhni; hawkers with their packs on their backs; more Tatars; some muzhiks returning to their farms from a visit to the city, having exchanged produce for merchandise; several officers, and two remarkably pretty young Russian girls with their duenna. The boat itself was a pleasant disappointment. It was quite after the American style, but with a flat bottom. On the upper deck we found seats near the young ladies and their chaperone. "Listen, Phil," I whispered, "they are speaking French. And how dainty their clothes are. They don't look at all like other maidens we have seen in these parts. The Yaroslav girls, who are considered fair, are plain in comparison."

"Perhaps they are not Russian at all, but French relations come to visit in this country."

"I heard them speak very decided Russian to the batrak carrying their luggage. Perhaps they have been in France at school, however." They sat so near us that I could not avoid overhearing fragments of their conversation. I imagined that they were discussing us. I suppose we looked different, too! One of them got up

to cross the deck and dropped her fan. Philip played the gallant, and when she thanked him, he said politely, "Not at all." The other sister glanced significantly at her companion, and I heard her say, "Aha, anglais!" Then I was sure our nationality had been under discussion, and that Phil's remark had decided them that we were English. After that they regarded us more curiously than ever. Finally, some prank of Happy's brought a smile to the face of the younger sister and soon we were in the midst of a conversation, somewhat halting on my part, but glib enough on theirs.

"We do not see many English on the Volga," one of them said.

"No? But we are not English." Their faces fell.

"Not — English? But we heard Monsieur say —"

"Something in English. But English is spoken in other places besides England." I smiled at their confusion. Then a light broke upon them.

"It could not be — perhaps — Madame, that you should come from America?" I assured them that their guess was correct. "Oh, but, Madame, we have never seen Americans, we could not have imagined for one moment —" They broke off and fell to talking rapidly in Russian. It was plain that we were indeed curiosities.

"Shall we get up and turn around for their inspection?" suggested Phil, "I think it proper to encourage ethnological research."

For the next half hour they pelted us with questions about America.

"We have heard of Paris," one of them said; "is it that America is in Paris?" I dispelled that illusion as gently as I could.

"Did you, by chance, ever hear of New York?" I asked.

"New York? I hardly know," halted the elder. "Did you, my sister, ever hear of the country called New York?"

This was too much for Philip.

"Oh, I say, Joyce, you'll have to explain. I can't sit by and hear this. You'll have to make them understand somehow." He arose and walked away in the excess of his emotion. So I, single-handed, undertook the apparently hopeless mission of demonstrating the comparative importance of America among nations, and the not insignificant rank of New York, as a city. Throughout my explanation, they all three looked interested but completely mystified. I despaired of making a success as teacher of geography to my class on the Volga.

"It's your turn," I said, when I had assured them for the second time that London and Berlin, as well as Italy, were not to be found on the map of the United States. "Now you must tell me something about your country, and where you learned to speak such very good French if you have never been further from Kostroma than Moscow."

"Our father was once in Petersburg," one of them replied, "and he there engaged for us a French nurse. She has lived with us always since we were very little children. We have no mother. Our good maman Clarette she mothers us, she keeps the house, she sends to Paris for our clothes, even." Which explained the exquisite garments.

"I should think she must have become a Russian also, by this time."

"Oh, but we are not Russians!" both exclaimed.

"Evidently it is our turn to guess," said Phil at my elbow. "You begin."

"You can't be Poles. You are certainly not Mongols. Perhaps you are Kirghiz!" They exploded with amusement. "Or Mordvins, or — or Cheremyssi."

"I guess Tatars!" declared Philip. Both the pretty girls got up and made him a bow, their black eyes sparkling with laughter.

"Right, Monsieur," they exclaimed, and then burst into little shrieks of hilarity at our astonished faces.

"But Tatar ladies wear veils over their noses," I protested.

"They used to, Madame, and some of the older ones do still, but not we younger ones. We do as we please now, just as do the Russian demoiselles."

"Tell us something about your home. You live near Kostroma?"

"Yes, Tatars have had a settlement there for four hundred years. Our father's great-grandfather came from Kazan. Our estate has been in our family two hundred years."

"Does your father cultivate the land?"

"Ah, no, Madame. He has near our home a linen factory. He is very rich. He gives us everything. He is a good, good father. You shall see him when we reach Kostroma."

In the scorching sun of the August afternoon we made the landing at Kostroma, capital of the province of the same name. When our young Tatar friends discovered their father on the shore, they hailed him affectionately.

"You must come with us ashore," they insisted, "and

meet our so dear Papa. He also has never seen an American."

The piles of cargo on the dock indicated that we should have time to spare, and, accordingly, we accepted their invitation and went with them down the gang-plank. A big man in dusty blouse, and boots to his thighs saluted the two young ladies with a kiss on either cheek, and shook hands with the duenna. When we were introduced, there was nothing we could say to each other, for, his daughters explained, he knew no language but his own Tatar, and Russian. He surveyed us with much interest, following their comments upon our nationality, and asked his interpreters to inquire whether it was true that one sailed for days in a great ship to find America. If the steamer's schedule had admitted of it, we should certainly have gone with them to their home for tea, as they cordially asked us to do. As it was, we contented ourselves with obtaining a hasty impression of the city, its golden cupolas glittering splendidly in the late afternoon sun. From the Ipatiev monastery on the river-bank, the young Michael was elected Tsar of Russia, thus founding the now extinct Romanov dynasty. In a near-by forest a peasant, Ivan Susanin, gave up his life to the Poles, rather than divulge the true hiding-place of Michael, and thereby furnished to the composer Glinka the inspiration for his great national opera, "A Life for the Tsar."

"Philip," I said, when we were again under way, "did you think the Volga would be like this?"

"With islands, and steep banks, and lots of green? No, I thought it would be a wide, lazy, unadorned stream, with sandy shores. But it's pretty, isn't it?"



NIZHNI NOVGOROD IN WINTER

"As pretty as can be." Truck gardeners were bending over patches of lettuce and cabbage on the shore, as the twilight stole upon us. Up stream came a horse tow-boat, driven by a young boy. When we tied up for the night, because of the sand-bars, we went to bed.

By three o'clock it was light enough to proceed. Outside on the bank we could hear the noise of feet, and voices. Women in bare feet, but with their heads well tied up, were loading the boat with firewood, which on this part of the Volga, is used as fuel, though below Nizhni, oil from the wells of Baku is burned. When we had taken on all the wood necessary, the captain signalled the batraks on shore to heave away the ropes, tied to trees. The side-wheels churned the water into a brown froth, but the boat did not budge.

"The expected has happened," announced Phil, coming into our cabin from a tour of investigation. "We are on a sand-bank. This could be the Mississippi if that mosque didn't show on top of the hill, and those were black rousters instead of Russian batraks." For four hours, every device known to Russian mind was employed to get us off. The paddles splashed, the captain shouted, the boat strained, the gongs rang "ahead" and then "astern," but still we stuck. About nine o'clock, a sister boat up from Nizhni Novgorod was hailed, and pulled us off.

The river here was only about six hundred feet wide, maintaining the same width as at Tver. At Astrakhan, at the palate of its seventy mouths, it measures a mile and a quarter across.

"Do you remember that old book in the imperial library, jená, in the room where they keep the thirty

thousand foreign books about Russia? The English diplomatist Fletcher wrote it in 1500 and something. He said, 'the Volga hath its head at the foot of an alder tree.' Where do you suppose that is?"

"In the Valdai Hills, south of Petersburg. I read that the Duna and the Dnieper had their source on the same plateau. See that gay lumber boat!" It was painted salmon colour and had a Nile green stripe along the plimsail line, and a gilded eagle on the prow.

We passed a small settlement of wretched hovels, and every Russian on the boat crossed himself and bowed. "What is it?" I said, my curiosity aroused. "It can't be that roadside shrine, surely, to which they are showing such reverence." We decided that it was naught else. "It may be a wonder-working ikon," surmised Phil. But we learned by later observation that the appearance of any shrine or sacred edifice was sufficient to produce the same result.

As brown as the Rhine is green, the great river flowed "with the dignity of an epic." Not a reef or a cataract disturbed its calm breast.

Overhead flew flocks of ravens, teal and grebes. A colony of kingfishers noisily discussed some matter of importance on a big boulder. We passed close enough to them to overhear what it was all about if we had understood bird-talk. An enormous traffic, befitting the longest river in Europe, was a constant source of interest to us. At Kineshma we had time to go up into the village, which stands on a high bank. In the rear of many of the houses were tall looms where men and women were weaving the coarse linen for which all this region is renowned. It will not be long, however, be-

fore hand-woven linen will be out of the market, as huge factories are springing up on every hand. We met one of the young officers who embarked at Yaroslav and as he spoke courteously to us as fellow-passengers, we improved the opportunity to ask him many questions about the peasant industries of this province. He went with us into a small tannery conducted by one villager in an out-house at the back of his cottage. His helpers were a clean-limbed lot, nude to the waist. From cow-hide, the red Russia leather is made, and from horse-hide, the black. The skins are tanned by a process which renders them mould-proof, owing to the damp and boggy nature of Russian soil. The artisans of this province also smelt "marsh-iron," and, in primitive quarters, turn carpenters' tools and other hand-made implements. From lime-tree bast, women and girls weave mats, and also the leggings which serve as both shoes and stockings to most muzhiks. As nearly all the manufactured products of Russia emanate from three or four provinces radiating from Moscow, the little towns are given more to commerce than to agriculture in distinction to the remainder of the country, where farming is almost exclusively the occupation of the inhabitants.

Certain kinds of lace are also made in this region, though one must go into the provinces of Minsk and Riazan to find really national designs. "Slavonic lace" is made with the needle, of very fine thread, and somewhat resembles Brussels lace in pattern. But the peasants who make lace in the provinces of Yaroslav and Kostroma employ cushions. The littlest girls are often apprenticed. We saw one or two who were so small that they could scarcely look over the tops of

the huge cushions upon which they threaded the linen filaments from pin to pin.

These provincial lace-making establishments are usually conducted in an annex of the head-worker's cottage. The average wage is not more than two cents an hour, so that a peasant girl is esteemed both clever and industrious if she earns twenty dollars by working throughout the long winter months.

Further down the river we called at small ports where the ship-builder's hammer is the chief implement of trade. The women-folk are also adepts at spinning flax. Our friend, the officer, who was en route for Samara, went with us on more than one expedition. When we wished to photograph the workers plying their interesting trades, not the least objection was made. In fact, we came to believe that Russians as a whole are fond of sitting for their picture, for everywhere we went, the sight of our camera brought requests to photograph a group, or a baby (usually very dirty), or a favourite farm animal.

At Gorodnets, where St. Alexander Nevsky died, we found much entertainment walking through a rude sort of outdoor bazaar. The peasants had congregated to exchange money or merchandise for hand-carved wooden spoons, fish-hooks, saucepans, bast boots, and toys for the babies. Pedlars of rye beer, or kvas, called their wares as do lemonade-mongers with us on similar occasions. One and all ate raw cucumbers as we eat oranges, and uncooked peas in the pod.

Lieutenant Sirasin presented me with a delightful donkey which, carved and jointed, stood upon a pine shingle. From his tail and his head depended a cord

which passed through a wooden bulb. Upon this bulb being swung like a pendulum, to and fro, first the tail of the donkey would wag, and then his head. I carried it back to the steamer in glee.

"You can give that to Helen Charlotte," suggested my husband. Said I, "If my small cousin is to have one of these bewitching affairs, you may go directly back and buy another. This is mine." So back he went. He had hardly gained the town when I saw that all the cargo on the dock had been loaded, and that we were about to put off. I ran to the deck-rail, and shouted to the dock-hands as they were pulling at the ropes. I waved wildly towards the town. They merely regarded me calmly and continued to pull. We began to move slowly, steadily away from shore towards mid-stream. Lieutenant Sirasin, even Happy, had gone with Phil. I was alone, without acquaintances, money or passport. I flew to the steps leading to the top deck and the pilot-house. The captain was in the wheel-room. I caught at his arm. I expostulated in English and German and French. I gesticulated. I implored. The men at the wheel stared. The captain stared. And now the boat had gained her channel, and was heading down-stream. I sat down on the captain's stool and began to cry. It was hopeless. The tragic waving of my arms towards the town signified nothing to these sluggish Russians. We should go on to Nizhni. I should be landed in the great wicked Fair Town alone and without a kopek in my pocket.

The captain looked on, embarrassed at my show of tears. He spoke to the wheel-men. They shook their heads. Suddenly, a great shouting arose from the bank.

Philip, the lieutenant, and Happy were racing along its edge, exerting their combined lung power to arrest the attention of someone on the steamer. "There!" I burst out in the midst of my tears, "perhaps now you can understand what I have been trying to tell you, you dull, horrid man!" The captain gave an order which halted the boat, and the three on shore put out in a skiff which, for liberal consideration, a batrak placed at their disposal.

I ran to the rail to watch them mount the ladder. The lieutenant was struggling hand over hand with Happy crushed under an arm. "Oh, Philip," I called down to my husband, labouring after, "I have been so frightened! They didn't know anything but Russian, and they wouldn't stop, and — and — I've been crying like a baby," I finished, ashamed now of my tear-streaked face. Happy scrambled into my arms, palpitating with the excitement of the chase. Then the lieutenant put a booted leg over the side, and held down a hand to my breathless husband. "Never mind, jená," he called between gasps, "we've got the donkey!" And a moment later he put into my hands the frivolous animal which had been the sole cause of the misadventure.



Chapter XI

YARMARK ADVENTURES

THE lieutenant's wife awaited him at the Nizhni dock, which we reached in the morning after being compelled to tie up a second night. At their suggestion, we accompanied them to the pension where Madame Sirasin had been living temporarily. She was a sprightly Polish woman, immensely proud of her good-looking husband, who was also a Pole.

"The Government sends us Poles to Russian posts, and the Russians to Polish," said he as we lurched in our drosky through the muddy streets. "They fear to trust Polish officers to command their own countrymen lest to revolt should be more easy." He spoke English with facility, though his wife knew only a few words which tripped from her lips archly accented. There are few Russian or Polish men of education who do not know English; it is the hall-mark of breeding.

Our pension was in the Kremlin quarter on the hill looking out over the Volga and the confluent Oka. The view was magnificent. We wanted all the more to see Kiev when we were told that, next to Kiev, Nizhni was the most beautifully situated city in the Empire.

On the distant plains we descried the figures of field labourers cutting grain. Up and down stream came river craft bringing fish from the Caspian, caviar from Astrakhan, carpets from Georgia, dried fruits from Bokhara, tea from Kiatkha, iron, furs, and precious

stones from Siberia. The more prosaic cargoes of England, Belgium, Germany, and the United States came down the Volga from the Baltic by the canals which make it possible to sail from the Atlantic to the Caspian. Across the widening river lay the sandy triangle, the straight aisles of commerce, and the twenty-five hundred stone booths which constitute the premises of the "Yarmark," or annual World's Fair of Nizhni Novgorod, the "Lower New City." The jagged sky-line of peak and turret and pagoda enticed us early on our way.

The Cossacks shouted, the mud splashed, the horses reared. We were crossing the floating boat-bridge which unites the city proper with the City of Traders, which annually increases the population of Nizhni from forty to a hundred and ninety thousand. The odour of greasy sheepskins and Russia leather boots was strong about us. Sturdy peasants surged close to our wheels, venders of tawdry baubles, long-bearded Orientals, German-Jew merchants, Circassians in kaftan and tall cap, ragged Kirghiz from the Siberian plains, an occasional woman with painted cheeks, lumber-jacks, Persian horse-dealers. The Cossacks policed the motley horde. The drosky lunged off the bridge into a slough of mud, clinging, oily mud which speckled and splashed our clothes and faces. "Oh, please!" implored Madame Sirasin in distress, and I echoed, "Yes, please! Let us get out and walk. Nothing can be worse than this." So we descended, and when the men had finished contending as to which should pay the cab-fare, we began on foot to explore the somewhat disappointing maze of shop and booth.

Each street had a number and was devoted to one or

two specific kinds of merchandise. With the lieutenant as interpreter, we found what Phil called "Tea Avenue," "Persian Jewelry Street," and "Fur Boulevard." On the latter, the wonderful displays of skins from the far north of Siberia proved very alluring to us women.

Most expensive of all was the black fox, but the sable skins were to my mind the most beautiful. The smiling merchant brought for our delectation strings of Siberian rat and psetz. And there was kúni, and Persian lamb-skin. Russian ladies frequently send agents here to select the shúbas or cloaks which keep them warm in winter, the lieutenant told us, and fur shoes from Archangel. "But one must know how to buy," he added. "Many foreigners are sadly cheated." When we went into the jewelry booths of the Gostinny Dvor, he warned us again. A merchant of Bokhara invitingly pushed toward us a tray of gems. But Philip, who had once gone around the world and had stopped in Colombo on the island of Ceylon, remembered too well a certain glass sapphire which he had there been inveigled into buying, and could not be persuaded now by the suave old Persian to run for the second time a risk of being swindled. In the shop where a Polish Jew glibly exhibited curios and trinkets of Siberian stones, I saw the lieutenant select from an assortment of lapis lazuli and malachite one or two specimens. A piece of the lapis he began to rub smartly upon the lining of his green jacket. "Aha!" he exclaimed when he had examined it again. He showed it to the shopkeeper who at first protested rapidly. But the lieutenant only smiled and turned to us with the lapis in his fingers, "You see those white spots? That is defective lapis. With a preparation of wax and

blue dye the spots are cleverly concealed. I know this fellow. He cheated me once. It is pleasant to confound him to his face."

So we bade good-bye to the swindling Jew, and went on past the booths of Tatars with false turquoises and Oriental ornaments made in Pforzheim, to the more reputable shops of Moscow merchants selling enamels set in gold and silver matte, and of Caucasians who stood behind cases filled with buckles and belts and brooches made of silver and black enamel. The silver is engraved by hand and the enamel is then poured into the tracery. The effect is somewhat the same as the Spanish Toledo work, only that is made by hammering the gold into patterns laid in the enamel. All the silver is marked by the Russian Government and bears the stamp R-84, instead of Sterling. I bought Philip a pair of brushes. They were intended for use in erasing the chalked scores from baize card-tables, but we agreed that they would do excellently as military hair brushes.

Other booths proved so alluring that the question of trunk room became a serious one. When, the next day, we came upon a shop selling boxes and small chests, painted and decorated by the muzhiks, we regarded it as a providential opportunity to supply ourselves with a souvenir which would hold other souvenirs. I hesitated between one ornamented with gold and silver spangles, and another which bore geometric designs in copper nail heads, doubtless forged by a peasant smithy. The corners were bound with the same red-brown metal, and there were thongs of leather to fasten down the lid, as well as a hand-wrought lock. A crash cover was sold with it for use in travelling, and the whole came to a



A TATAR PEDDLER



little over six rubles, or three dollars. "My Russian shirt-waist box," I called it. We took it on a drosky and drove to an arcade where Vladimir ikons were for sale, that is, holy pictures painted in the province of Vladimir at Suzdal. These particular ikons were of especial interest because they were the handiwork of a race of people called Ofeni, direct descendants of those who came originally from Constantinople bringing the first ikons known in Russia, in the days of Vladimir, Prince of Kiev, the Greek Church's first convert in Muscovy. The merchant who displayed the holy pictures, big and little, plain and ornate, spoke a Turkish dialect, and had a sharp physiognomy which denoted his ancestry. Lieutenant Sirasky explained that most of the ikons on sale were painted in villages where it is the custom for each feature to be limned by different workmen. For instance: Ksenia makes a specialty of noses, and Marfa of eyes, while Mikhéi does mouths extra well, and Demian has no superior in drawing hands. It is imperative that the features do not vary in shape or expression, and that the old models brought from Byzantium be exactly copied; otherwise, how should a muzhik who cannot read know St. Nicholas from St. Seraphim? St. Nicholas, by the way, is the favourite saint of all, and has twice as many holy days as any other saint. A peasant's Trinity is "The Father, the Son, and St. Nicholas."

The market for these holy pictures, overlaid with metal, is enormous. Every Orthodox household in Russia contains one in almost every room; and more than this, there is not a shop, not even a brandy shop, which has not its ikon hanging in the main room, on the upper

wall in the right hand corner called "Great," or "Beautiful." A muzhik's most precious possessions are:

His samovar

His ikon

His child.

The samovar is the most precious because it is expensive and another cannot easily be bought by a poor man. The ikon is also very dear, for it costs money, too, and the priest will not bless it for nothing. A child — of course a child is also to be treasured — but, if it dies — God will send another.

In the wholesale samovar mart were hundreds on exhibition from Tula, the Russian Pittsburgh, and finer ones from Yaroslav. The Orient supplies the tea and the Russians send back to the Orient the samovars with which to brew it. Also the beet sugar, the refining of which is becoming one of the great industries of Russia. The samovar is of brass, lined with tin. In the centre is a tube in which is placed the braise of red-hot charcoal cinders which has been ignited outside. The water is poured around the tube of coals, and when it is boiling, is drawn off by a spigot. Russian tea is taken much weaker than is the custom elsewhere, and many times, among the peasants who count tea a luxury, "a cup of tea" is in reality but a cup of hot water flavoured by a tea-leaf. The Tea Dépôt was most interesting. The merchants sat in mat booths, or zinvskas. The tea comes in huge wrappers of hide, to keep out the moisture. That which Russians consider the finest flavoured is shipped via caravan and the Kama river

from the frontier of China. It is sold only in bulk to the trade, but there were eight-ruble, one-pound boxes put up for the casual visitor, which bore a Mongolian label and the seal of the custom-house at Kiatkha. By the evening mail we dispatched a package to Phil's mother and one to mine. We were weary from tramping the miles-long warehouses of the "Siberian Line" and agreed to postpone until the next evening the dinner within the Fair City to which our young Polish friends had invited us. On the wharves we had watched for hours the wiry Tatars unloading barge cargoes for the Fair. There were barrels of dried fish from the prolific fisheries of the Volga and Caspian, coffee from Brazil, hardware from the province of Novgorod, wine-skins from the Caucasus, and watermelons from South Russia. Likewise, salt from Perm, cotton from the United States, gold from the Urals, silks from Asia, and wine from the Crimea and from France. Said Philip, as we looked on at the cosmopolitan array, "There may be those blasé enough to lament that Nizhni, because of the inroads of the railways, is now a sterile waste from a romantic viewpoint. I can't agree with them. We have found something novel and informing at the turning of every corner. I am glad we came." With which sentiment I concurred, though repeated warnings that the Fair was not what it had been, had at first somewhat overshadowed my extravagant anticipations.

As the following morning was hot and very sultry, we persuaded the lieutenant and his wife to take a furlough from the arduous office of guide and interpreter. By this time we knew the way well, and set out to the

Asiatic quarters and the outskirts of the Fair proper. Each of the twelve main streets terminates in a pagoda of florid architecture, and this assemblage of booths constitutes the "Chinese Quarter," which is, however, guiltless of a queue. A tidal wave of swart humanity swept us along the less reputable alleys skirting the quarter and the river. Here, turbans and flapping garments were more often seen than trousers and starched linen. On the decks of the crude barges were Georgian girls whose untutored beauty is lauded far beyond the borders of their own mountain country of old Iberia. Strolling near the water-edge we were but an arm's-length from a Tiflis belle who leaned from the tiny window of the superstructure which served as a cabin. A little wooden cage hung from the ledge of the window and in it was a scarlet songster which nibbled at a piece of chicory thrust through the bars. The face of the red-bird's mistress was oval and tinted delicately as if from the reflection of the ripe pomegranate into which she had set her white teeth. A pair of silk-fringed lids unveiled two merry eyes, and hair, dark as midnight, was coiled low over a broad brow. A loose blouse of rough azure-coloured silk revealed a throat and breast of skin so fair that the veins showed beneath in a blue tracery.

Unconsciously we smiled at the dainty picture, and the Georgian girl smiled in return. Then, moved by a pretty impulse, she reached her hand into a basket of the brilliant fruit within the cabin and tossed us each a pomegranate. When Philip unwittingly made a wry face at the first bite, she laughed aloud. Then she vanished to appear in a moment at the door. She gestured

for us to come aboard, and, hesitating the fraction of a minute, we stepped from the shore to the barge deck, and mounted the short flight to the cabin. There was a woven mat upon the floor, and crisp curtains at the tiny windows. Bright embroideries draped the tables and chairs. Our little hostess did the honours with Oriental grace, bringing a bowl of melons and apricots and setting out odd-shaped wine glasses. From a buffalo-skin she poured wine as deep red as Beaune and with a bouquet which met our nostrils like the fragrance of grapes upon the vine. We surmised that it was a native product, recalling that the vineyards of the Caucasus are celebrated. At the first sip our anticipation turned to bitterness. It was truly a native product flavoured most unappetisingly by the buffalo-skin in which it had been transported from the Georgian slopes. And flavoured, also, as we found later from an old Russian general who had been stationed at Derbent, by the naphtha with which the skins are coated to make them better air-proof. When the girl turned her back to fetch us serviettes of red damask, Philip seized the moment to empty our glasses into the Oka. We lingered a half-hour looking at photographs of the marvellously beautiful Caucasian mountain scenery, of the Dariel Pass, of modern Tiflis and of Baku, the oil metropolis of Russia. I wore a small brooch showing the enamelled head of an Indian chief, and at this I saw the little Iberian glance from time to time. So I finally took it off and offered it to her, a slight acknowledgment of her winsome courtesy. She was unfeignedly delighted, and I have no doubt, looked upon the strange creature with the war-feathers in his hair as an ethnological curiosity surpass-

ing any she had ever seen among the cosmopolites of the Nizhni Fair.

She pinned the brooch into the blue of her blouse and regarded with satisfaction the effective contrast of colours. We bade her a mute but cordial good-bye, and walked on along the river-bank. When we looked back to the window of the young beauty, we could see her leaning again from the window-ledge, calling gaily to her companions to come and see the enamelled trinket, to which she proudly pointed.

Phil was for turning back as the surroundings became less and less inviting. But I was not yet satiated with Asiatic sights and sounds and pressed him against his better judgment to go one step further. Strange twanging music sounded from a sort of summer garden, and within, we could see men of the East and women idling over a game, and sipping yellow *chài*. "Come," I urged my more cautious husband, cautious on my account rather than on his own, "if you will just go in here and order a glass of tea while I drink my fill, not of tea, but this Arabian Nights atmosphere, I won't beg to go to another place to-day."

"But, Joyce, you know what the lieutenant said the last thing. I don't like the look of this crowd. To a girl it seems all romance, this turban-and-belted-robe, sombre-eyes-and-olive-skin-business, but a man knows the dirty souls within their straight carcasses. I don't care about having you look at them, and I don't know that I want them to look at you — too hard."

"Oh, jealous, Philip!" I twitted unfairly. "It's only a phase of life I want to see. Please! And afterwards I'll do exactly as you ask."

Of course he yielded. "I don't know why I have so little character when you beg that way," he scolded. "But come on, I guess I can take care of you. There's a table in the corner."

"No, we can't see so well there. We'll take that one the waiter is motioning us to. I am hungry," I said when we were fairly seated. "Couldn't we have luncheon here? They probably have things to eat as well as to drink." So Philip snapped a finger for the too-eager waiter, and I inquired in French for the *ménu*.

"There is no *ménu*, Madame," he replied with an atrocious accent. "For our customers it would need to be written in Russian and Armenian, and besides — in Arabic and Tatar. So I must tell to each one in his own tongue what dishes are prepared. If it please you, I will recount them in German, French or Italian. It is as Madame wishes." I cut short his volubility by requesting a brief recital in French. And he began automatically to relate that there was mushroom soup, and an excellent dish made of fresh fish and fermented cabbage with white grapes baked crisp on top. Or, if we preferred, we might have sturgeon pâtés with isinglass. Also, there was mutton with buckwheat dressing, and, of course, cucumbers, dwarf cucumbers from Kostroma, superbly flavoured. For dessert we were offered klubiúka, chestnuts, honey and grapes. Philip looked dubious when I translated the bill of fare. "Oh, let us be sensible, Joyce, and go back to comparative civilisation for luncheon. We can't eat such — messes."

Two tall Orientals in striped over-garments and white turbans, entered the garden and sat down on mats, preparatory to taking out long pipes.

"Oh, Phil, dear, don't take me away now," I wailed. "Here we are seeing the creatures almost in their native environment."

"Alright," said my husband crossly, "order what you choose. This is your party." So I named to the smiling waiter, whose soiled silk shirt had been brushing my shoulder, the dishes which I judged would be the least offensive to our western palates, and sent him away. Then I leaned my elbows unconventionally upon the round unsteady table and proceeded to study mankind as exemplified in the hook-nosed long-faced Armenians with their daintily-featured country-women, and another group who, I decided, were probably Turcomans. My attention was distracted from these by the entrance of five or six perfectly superb figures, with brilliant eyes and fresh colour. They walked with the haughty gait of the savage, their tunics sweeping from stalwart shoulders and flapping against high red boots.

The heads were shaven except for a long dark lock which fell from the crown, and they wore heavy moustaches. I nudged Phil to look at them, but he would not, and persisted in regarding attentively the abstruse tables of the Nizhni-Moscow train schedule. "Very well," I murmured, "sulk! I didn't know you had it in you. Here we are in a perfectly fascinating Perso-Turco-Armenian haunt, and you are trying to spoil it all."

"If you call fascinating those greasy, hawk-eyed grubbers in their bath-robe clothes, I will not contend with you. I thought you had different tastes." That was too unreasonable to answer, and I said so. After a while, I began again in a cheerful attempt to smooth



THE CHAPEL OF THE IVERSKY VIRGIN



over the unpleasantness. "Those men smoking the pipes are Persians, I am sure. They look exactly like that patriarch who tried to cheat you about the cat's-eye, remember?" No answer. "Oh, alright—" I began. Philip was staring savagely at a group who were staring impudently back at us.

"Philip," I warned, "you can't correct the manners of barbarians. Stop glaring at those people. If they are annoying you, you can pretend not to see them."

"I don't want to pretend not to see them," he resisted stubbornly. "I want them to see they can't force their insolent attentions on two Americans who are at least minding their own affairs." Which wasn't quite reasonable, since *I* had been devoting every minute to attending to theirs! However, there was no use trying to calm him. If the waiter had not at that moment appeared with the mushroom soup I should have insisted that we depart for a less irritating place to lunch. Every time I raised my eyes I dropped them again in confusion, for never once did I fail to encounter glances from the shaven-headed stalwarts, which sent the blood to my temples. At last I could bear it no longer, and confessed to my husband that I was ready, quite ready, to go as soon as we could get the waiter's attention and ask for the bill. As we pushed back our chairs from the half-consumed luncheon, the boldest of the group opposite arose also and started to the door. The Armenians and their women had already gone out. We were almost alone in the restaurant with the audacious scoundrels. The one at the door looked into the street and turned back excitedly. He began to talk with great rapidity. The others crowded close and there was more

talk and gesticulation. "What do you suppose it is all about?" I said to Phil, as we shoved our way between tables and chairs.

"I haven't the least notion, but I propose to get out of this place before we are hemmed in. Follow me," he commanded sharply. As we drew near the doorway the group pushed close about us and jostled Phil to one side. "Joyce," he called quickly, "go into the street. If you see a policeman, send him here, but get out, whatever you do." I turned to the arbour arch, but two knaves in flowing white stood in my path. "I can't get past these men," I cried, aghast at the position into which my whims had forced us.

As I spoke, a black-haired girl in European dress came in a side entrance and stopped in amazement at the *mêlée* before her. Phil, against the wall, was striking out with vigorous fists across the little table out of which he had made a barricade for himself. So swift was the play of his arms that the Asiatics, unused to such tactics, were unable to seize hold of him as they had evidently attempted to do. Their purpose had undoubtedly been robbery only, but, their victim proving so stubborn an opponent, I began to fear that they would not long delay in resorting to methods to which they were probably only too well accustomed. An ugly *kinjal* protruded through the belt of a swarthy brute near me, and I saw him finger it tentatively. "*Mademoiselle*," I screamed to the young woman with the black hair who had run towards the struggling figures, "do something to save us. They will kill my husband!" In my excitement I besought her in English, and in English she turned and answered me!

"I will do what I can. Stay where you are." She seized the arm of one of the men and spoke harshly to the others in a savage tongue. At once they left off the unequal contest and fell to jabbering altogether, while Philip, quite breathless, leaned against the wall, white with rage.

For minutes which to me, shaking and faint, became hours, the men and the girl discussed in their uncouth speech. At last the argument came to an end, and the young woman addressed Philip, motioning to the others to be silent. "Have you money with you, sir? Much money?"

"If you will promise that those cowards will not attack me while my hands are in my pockets, I will show you what I have."

"No," I cried, "they will not believe you. Let the girl search." So Philip, still standing against the wall, opened wide his coat and the girl ran her long white hands into his pockets, laying on the table what she found. Too weak to stand, I sat down on a bench, praying the Fates that Phil had left with the lieutenant his watch and letter of credit. In a chamois bag about my neck was nearly all of the currency we had with us. Unless the vandals insisted upon my being searched also, our loss could not be very great, if he had taken the lieutenant's advice.

When the pile upon the table was complete, I sighed with relief, for there was nothing there of any value except a few ruble notes and a silver knife. The men made a move to crowd closer to finger the belongings, but the girl imperiously waved them back. She opened the bill folder for them to see how little reposed there. She dis-

played for their satisfaction a bunch of keys on a key chain; she shook out some clippings from a note-book and unclasped a pocket-case containing my picture. In the change pocket she had found some silver and three American cents.

The would-be robbers looked from one to the other and back to the insignificant heap on the table. Then with one accord their keen eyes turned on me. "It is coming!" I thought, breathing a petition that at least the bulky letter from Mademoiselle Ahary to the Moscow girl might remain undiscovered within the blind pocket of my petticoat. I wore no ring but Phil's gold circlet on my left hand. My brooch shone on the breast of a young Georgian. Evidently it did not once occur to the savages that a man would entrust to a woman a considerable sum of money. They withdrew their greedy eyes. My little store and the letter were safe! I opened my chatelaine bag to find my handkerchief, as I smiled wanly at my husband, who was still too angry to smile back. The man nearest me had seen the movement. He spoke to the other men. That bag's contents had not been divulged. Should they let that go unsearched? his expressive hands demanded. The others surged toward me a step or two, and Phil leaped from his place by the wall. "Get back, you scoundrels!" he yelled. "Don't you lay one of your rascally fingers on her! Joyce, show the girl what you have in that bag."

I turned it upside down on the table. Out rolled a wee gold pencil and a silver vanity box — hand-engraved and fitted with miniature toilet articles. As its glitter caught the glance of one of the robbers he sprang for it, but I was the quicker. In a trice I had caught it up

and stood glaring defiantly at the villain who would rob me of one of my dearest possessions. Then a clamour arose about the ears of the young woman. Evidently the price of our freedom was the release of all our belongings which seemed good to the robbers. The girl turned to me deprecatingly. "I am sorry. You must give it to me. Perhaps they will not want to keep it."

I flung it on the ground. "There, you barbarians, take it, and much good may it do *you!*"

The fall sprung the catch and, to the chagrin of the bandits, there rolled onto the sandy floor, not gold, but a tiny powder puff! A young fellow with defiant eyes and a great scar streaking his cheek, gathered up the absurd file and looking-glass, and to the glee of his companions began to dab powder on his straight nose, the while regarding himself complacently in the mirror. I looked at Phil, my lips quivering with suppressed mirth, but he was still glowering fiercely at the outrageous rogues. Then, as they made no further move to restrain us, he seized his hat from the floor and shouted, "Run for it, jená. Here's our chance!" We gained the door and were in the street, when we heard the girl's voice calling. In trepidation I looked over my shoulder. She was running after us with Phil's trinkets in her hands. "You are very good, I am sure," he said gratefully. "I was sorry to run off without telling you how we appreciated your good offices. Won't you let me know how I can reward you?"

But she shook her head. "You are an American gentleman," she said. "I have been in America to dance at your St. Louis Fair. Americans were kind to me. I am glad I came in time to save you — for I

think they would have killed you, perhaps,— my countrymen.”

“Yes, your countrymen are rather ugly customers. May I ask to what nation they owe allegiance?”

“We are from the mountains of Circassia,” she replied. “It is not there a sin to rob.” Circassians! Fierce and uncouth as the crags of their native Caucasus —marauders by birth! The black-haired girl turned to go. “Please wait,” I called after her, quickly pencilling our pension address on one of Phil’s cards. “Come to us to-morrow. We must find some way to show our appreciation of your bravery and quick wit.”

An opportune drosky drew up to the curb at Phil’s raised finger.

“Will you come?” I said, as we drove off. But she shook her head.

“She will not come,” said Philip, and his prophecy proved correct. We never saw our saviour again. We drove back through the long busy streets, over the bridge of boats and up the steep hill to the Kremlin, I silent, chastened — Philip still somewhat shaken by our melodramatic experience. We decided not to relate the incident to the lieutenant and his wife, and accordingly went with them in the evening to dine at Nikita’s, our lips sealed on the subject of our day’s adventure.

The broad wooden building occupied by Moscow’s famous restaurateur was filled with merchants from almost every country on the globe.

“These,” said the lieutenant, “are the sons of men who used to bring to Nizhni their entire stock of goods, for it was not formerly the custom to show here samples merely. Since their fathers’ day, the banking system

has also completely altered. Now the Orientals accept cheques and drafts, but a few years ago all settlements were made in cash."

"Good picking for thieves, with the business of the Fair amounting to millions upon millions of rubles."

"Excellent," agreed the lieutenant, "provided those with cash in their pockets wandered indiscreetly beyond the legitimate limits of the Fair."

"Is it dangerous to go to the outskirts?" I inquired with guilty innocence.

"It is positively hazardous of both life and pocket-book, Madame. There are Khesvurs from the provinces of the Caucasus to whom the taking of a life would be but a day's incident, if robbery were the motive."

I refrained from looking at Philip as he nonchalantly fingered his glass.

"Well, here's to a kind Fate," he murmured, "and better sense next time!" Whereat he poked my foot under the table and gave me a mischievous glance.



Chapter XII

MOSCOW AND A LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

*W*E had been in Moscow three days before we went to the Kremlin. From our balcony across the Moskva, we had steeped our souls in the sight of its fabled heights, garishly flaunting their gold and blue, their red, green, and silver in the brilliance of noonday, and, again, veiling their glitter beneath the enchanting mystery of moonlight. We had seen pinnacle and turret, cross and cupola radiant with the reflection of setting sun and turquoise sky. Each morning we had looked upon it bathed in the enhancing mist of dawn — a dream of the East, a glory of line and symmetry! Before we passed under its gates, I wished to be so held by the spell of its external beauty that neither shabby plaster nor too-showy embellishment could later dispel the memory of the gentle river, the ribbon of foliage, the snowy battlements, the crown of towers.

In the days since we had entered the white walls of Holy Mother Moscow, we had wandered for miles through a maze of streets and bazaars; had gone out to the resorts of Marina Roschia and the woods of Lakoluiki; had visited an old convent on the borders of the town, and had made a pilgrimage to the gorgeous Temple of the Saviour, built in gratitude for the deliverance of Moscow from the army of Napoleon in 1812 and adorned with a series of paintings by Vereschagin.

We had also been through the Foundling Asylum, or

House of Education, elder sister to the one in Petersburg. The Government playing-card monopoly, and pawn-shops, and revenues from lands bequeathed by various monarchs yield an income of millions of dollars a year. About fifteen thousand waifs are admitted annually. Eight hundred nurses and six hundred teachers care for and instruct the wards of the Government.

Each child has a nurse, usually a peasant woman, who is paid fifteen cents a day. The well babies are sent with their foster-mothers into the country at the age of four weeks, but about half of them die in infancy. When they are of school age, they return to the institution, and there, the one-third who live to be educated, are taught elementary studies and certain trades, as well as French, German, and music, if they show promise. The girls are in demand for governesses because of their superior instruction, and the boys become artisans, soldiers, and farmers. From their entrance into the Asylum, about a cent a week is laid by for each child, and, in the case of the girls, the accumulated amount serves as a dowry when they marry. They often make good matches, for they are not, as a rule, handicapped by the possession of immediate relatives!

On a fair August morning, we loitered across the Stone Bridge, turned up the inclined road leading to the Trinity Gate, and entered the triangle enclosing the Kremlin. The French invaders passed under the same arch when they climbed the hill to loot the cathedrals and palaces contained within the bastions of the fortress, and later, fled through it with the flames of the burning city at their backs.

For two reasons we chose to go first to the insignificant

church of the Saviour in the Wood, huddled beneath the overhanging walls of the immense palace of the Emperors. First, it is the mother of the five hundred churches of Moscow; second, it is the shrine at which maidens pray who are about to become brides. At the door we bought three wax candles, for I had a fancy to follow the ancient law-of-brides and place a glowing taper before the faded paintings of the three martyrs who do especially intercede for the happiness of those treading the vestibule of matrimony. Philip stood by the door while I made my pilgrimage from shrine to shrine where devout young figures were already kneeling. And as I lighted each taper and set it in an empty sconce I, too, said a prayer for Heaven's blessing upon a union, not to-be, but already consummated. At the third shrine, a young girl was weeping silently as she knelt on the stone floor — weeping, perhaps, because she was an unwilling bride.

When I joined my Philip and we passed out the low doorway, under which so many have passed with beating, hopeful hearts, I looked into his face and smiled. "Did you mind waiting?" I said softly.

"No, I liked it, jená dear. If you want to, we will come again." And more than once after that we did go again, to rest a moment in the dim church of the Praying Brides.

Until noon we wandered through the pink and blue and white silk-hung halls of the Great Palace, and down corridors leading to terraces haunted by memories of old Muscovy. In the throne-room of ancient Tsars, under low frescoed arches, the feast is laid at which the new Emperor sits with his nobles after the coronation, when



BIRTHPLACE OF GOGOL, NEAR JANOVSINA

the shelves surrounding the central pillar are filled with marvellous gold plate and imperial insignia.

The intimate apartments of the royal families of old are in the Terem, where an essentially Russian atmosphere prevails. Here we could imagine the imperial mothers surrounded by future Tsars and Grand Dukes, happy to withdraw from the tempestuous life at court to the comparative tranquillity of their own domestic circle. To every Russian peasant, the upper part of a house is still the Terem, sacred to the mother and children of the household. From the balcony we looked out upon a foreground of roofs and minarets, and beyond, to the city of Moscow set upon its seven hills embraced in the winding arms of the Moskva.

The throne used by Peter the Great's father, which stands in the Treasury, is encrusted with nearly a thousand diamonds and more than a thousand rubies and pearls. The crown of Michael Romanov exhibits the unrivalled art of Russian workers in enamel and is bordered by nearly two hundred jewels. The mitre of Peter the Great's brother John is embellished with a thousand diamonds. In the crown ordered by Peter for his second empress there are over two thousand diamonds besides coloured gems of great value. "Not a bad dust-cap," Philip commented, recalling the humble occupation of the first Catherine.

When an Orthodox baby is baptised, its eyelids, ears, mouth, hands and feet are touched by the priest with holy mir. In the sacristy of the Holy Synod we saw the silver kettles and the jars, one for each bishopric, in which the oil is prepared and sent out to the bishops following the sacred ceremony of its distilling at intervals of two or

three years. At their coronation, the Tsars are anointed with the same holy chrism. Every utensil used in its preparation is of silver and every drop is consecrated as it is filtered into the silver vessels. The base of the precious mixture consists of drops which fell as Mary Magdalen bathed the feet of Christ, according to the Russian belief. With the sacred fluid are united wine, oil and spices. In this treasure-house of the Greek Church there were also priests' robes, panagias, mitres, crosiers and ecclesiastical vessels weighty with precious stones, a scintillating manifestation of pagan devotion.

In the Cathedral of the Assumption, Tsars are crowned, in the Church of the Annunciation they are married, and in the Crypt of the Archangel Michael, those who reigned before Peter the Great are buried.

If the Moscow Kremlin is the incarnation of Russia, the Cathedral of the Assumption is its heart. Externally, it is ornate in the Russian style; within, the massing of colour is almost overwhelming, affecting the eyes as does cape jasmine the nostrils. The superlative richness of the painted walls, the massive shrines, the glistening altars; the effulgence of the ikonostas and its jewelled relics exceed imagination.

In the nave, the Tsars of Russia crown themselves Emperor of Russia, Tsar of Moscow, Grand Duke of Finland, Prince of Esthonia, and through the Royal Doors, which swing but this once to the touch of the imperial hand, they pass to the sacred feast spread for them upon the high altar.

The bones of the once-powerful patriarch Nikon are venerated as they lie under a golden tomb. Another shrine, made of silver, shelters the dust of St. Philip, who,

because he dared to speak the truth to Ivan the Terrible, was beaten and driven from this church to the monastery where he was afterwards murdered.

Within the unpretentious walls of the Annunciation Church, Napoleon's horses were tethered under the staring eyes of saints and martyrs. Soft nostrils sniffed about the gilded altars for stray grain, and the cathedral of imperial weddings resounded with the stamping of hoofs on the jasper floor. The images, and the relics of the crucifixion, brought from Constantinople nearly six hundred years ago, were removed from the edifice before its desecration, being replaced upon the restoration of Moscow.

The grandson of Alexander Nevsky was the first Tsar to be laid in the ancient mausoleum of the Archangel Michael; here lie also, by an historic coincidence, the last princes of the houses of Rurik and Romanov — Dmitri, who was stabbed by command of his ambitious uncle, Boris Gudonov, and Theodore I, elder brother to Dmitri; likewise, Peter II, in whose death died the dynasty of the Romanovs. Dmitri lies in a silver shrine, and is counted a martyr. The tomb of John the Terrible is strangely honoured by a place next the altar. Philip could have gone behind the screen, to see the golden books and vessels bestrewn with emeralds and pearls, but he refused. "I can't," he protested, "my senses are satiated. I am nauseated with beauty. Let me go where I can see coarse grass and rude trees!" So we went that evening to dine in the People's Park, where we saw sportive Moscow at its plainest.

Swings and wooden toboggan slides were filled with merry-makers, who, however, took their outing stoically.

and without laughter. A performer on the garmonka, or accordion, was sure to have an admiring audience. A trio, who sang and thrummed a balalaïka, a sort of guitar, were also well received. Venders of tea and kvas did a flattering business, offering their wares without the boisterous insistence usually associated with their vocation. Group after group sat dawdling over the tea-cup and samovar. And at midnight, they were dawdling still.

We had purposely delayed in presenting our letters to the friends of Prince K. and Mademoiselle Ahary because we wished neither of them to feel the wearisome obligation of showing us "the sights." But when we had been in Moscow a week, had climbed the tower of Tall John — Ivan Veliki; had measured our height by the colossal sides of the Monarch Bell which, broken by a fall from a burning tower, stands twenty feet high and weighs over three hundred thousand pounds; when we had seen the Tsar cannon, and had driven out to the red Petrovsky palace, where the Tsarevitch, awaiting to be crowned, spends three days in fasting and prayer; when we had heard the gypsies sing in the park, and had been out the Tverskaya Boulevard to the trotting races run on a track of pounded brick dust, and had seen the principal race won by an American jockey "up" on a Kentucky filly, we felt that the major part of our sight-seeing had been accomplished and that consideration no longer demanded further delay. But when Philip came to look for the letter of the Prince, he could not find it. When we left Vologda he had, presumably, placed it in his memorandum book. Whether he had removed it later and put it elsewhere, he could not remember. "Never mind," he exclaimed, as an illuminating thought dispersed the cloud of our disappointment, "I

remember the firm of which the Prince said his friend was president. I will look up the address in the telephone book (with the assistance of the doorman downstairs), hie me to the proper street and number, ask for the president, and announce myself as the American friend of whom Prince K. said he had already written." As this scheme seemed practicable, Philip went on his way the next morning, after driving me first to the Tretiakov Gallery, where it was agreed he should join me later.

Under the skylights of this picture gallery are gathered some of the best examples of the infant Russian school of painting. The Russian artist, whether musician, painter, or actor, tells only what he has seen and felt. He does not originate forms, allegories, characters which are extraneous to his own nature and experience. The brush of the landscapist draws scenery which actually exists. Volkov, one may be sure, has seen with his own eyes the marshes, glades and birch-trees which he has put upon canvas. And so with Dobrovolsky, who paints the steppes with boggy roads in perspective, and Bogolubov, who does sun-lit marines. Schverzov has been face to face with his muzhik models, and, likewise, Maximov's poor have sat to him in the life. Russian art is natural, realistic, and most affecting. Find, if you can, paintings more heart-stirring than Repin's. In every picture of burlak, convict, and exile there is a vital story. His master, Kramskói, is represented in the Tretiakov gallery by portraits of Turgénev, Dostoievski, and Bielinsky, Russia's most noted literary critic. With Vereschagin's art Americans are acquainted, and, as well, with the tragedy which removed prematurely one of the world's best endowed artists. I was seated with French catalogue in hand be-

fore one of the sculptures of Autopolski, when Philip came for me. "Joyce," he began, looking worried, "what is the name of Mlle. Marie's friend to whom we are to deliver her letter?"

"Liuba Marilov," I responded promptly. I had fixed it ineffaceably upon my memory, since Mlle. Ahary had not dared to write the address upon the envelope in case we should lose it, and the written name should bring us all into trouble.

"Marilov?" echoed Philip. "You are sure?"

"Never surer of any name in my life."

"Well, it may be only a coincidence, but do you know the name of Prince K.'s friend is Marilov, also. Funny, isn't it?"

"Rather odd," I corrected, "but not so mysteriously strange as your manner would indicate."

"I am thinking of the complications, in case it should turn out that Liuba Marilov is the daughter of Marilov, head of the bridge-building works, which I have just been inspecting."

"Complications?"

"Don't you think it would be rather awkward to find ourselves in the position of having to communicate a secret message to the daughter of the house where we have been invited to dine by a host who is a rabid Reactionary, opposed to every hint of revolution and reform?"

"Well, yes."

"What are we going to do about it? I have accepted Mr. Marilov's invitation for to-morrow night. His wife will call on you this afternoon."

"That will perhaps give us an opportunity to discover

whether Marie's comrade, who, by-the-way, is a civil engineer, bears the same name as the Prince's friend by accident only, or by —"

"By birth," finished Phil.

When, some hours later, a house-boy brought me the cards of Madame and Mademoiselle Marilov, I felt intuitively that upon their ascending to our sitting-room, I should see the girl into whose hands we had promised to deliver the thick packet, which I had safeguarded night and day ever since the morning we said good-bye to Marie. But how, without arousing the suspicion of her mother, was I to tell her this afternoon whose emissaries we were, and make an appointment when we might safely execute our mission?

Madame Marilov extended her hand with high-bred grace. "You will pardon, I am sure, I do not speak much English — a little only, but we must come à l'instant to meet the friends of Prince K. My daughter," she said with a pretty move of her hand, "she knows the English well. She can express better our pleasure to see you in Moscow." Happy was already making Mlle. Marilov welcome in best puppy-dog fashion and was, in turn, being patted and exclaimed over by an attractive girl dressed from the tip of her ostrich plumes to the hem of her broderie gown in the height of the prevailing Paris fashion. "This cannot be she," my glance said to Philip. "This modish creature cannot be a graduate civil engineer, and a comrade of revolutionists." I dismissed the notion as absurd, and forgot the necessity of communicating to her the mysterious phrase confided to us by Mlle. Ahary. Philip brought chairs for us to sit on the balcony.

"Such a darling dog!" Mlle. Marilov exclaimed, dragging the delighted Happy over her embroideries and allowing her to lick her gloves in a vain effort to reach the hands beneath. "Did you bring her all the way from America?"

"No indeed, she is a Russian of the Russians. Prince K.'s baby was her first mistress, but I grew so fond of her that he gave her to me."

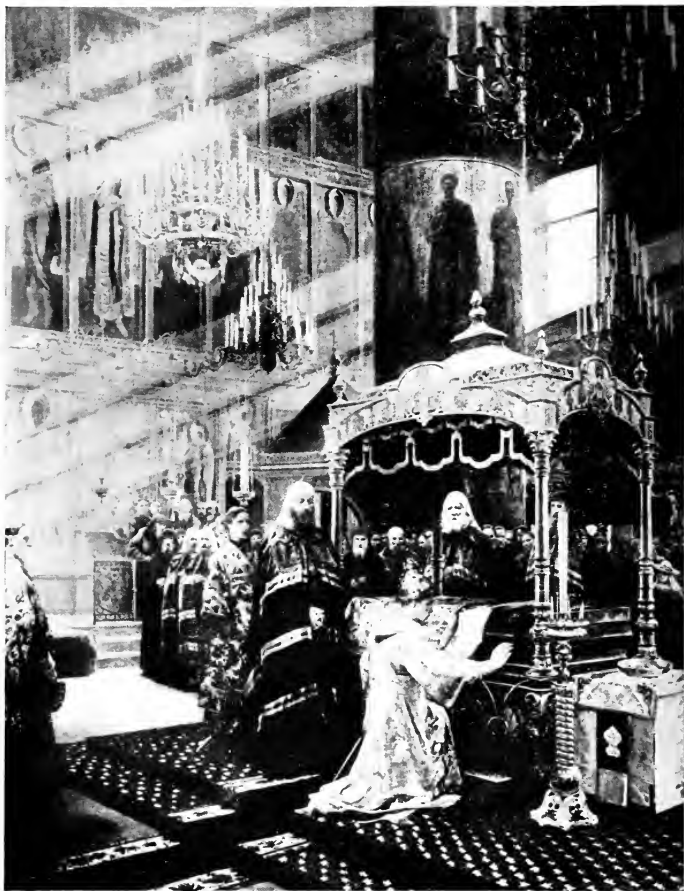
"And you are going to take her with you every place you go?"

"Every place we go," I responded, laughing. "I confess that I am quite foolish about her. She is such an affectionate little creature, it would be an austere person indeed who could resist her adorable ways. Don't you think her eyes are nearly human?"

Mlle. Marilov held the little dog-face between her hands and looked into it sympathetically.

"I never see so nearly human an animal as this," stroking the white silk ears, "without being reminded of Turgénev's prose poem about a little ape which kept him company during a foggy crossing to England. Do you remember it? The monkey was being forwarded to someone in London and was chained to the leg of a deck seat. Every time Turgénev passed, the creature would put out its small cold paw — hand, he calls it, and he would take it in his and sit down by it until the poor little shivering ape would grow quiet and stop its peeping. The captain was gruff and Turgénev was the only passenger, so, when they were befogged for some hours, he found comfort in the company of the monkey, child of their common mother, Nature."

"Is not this a charmant view of the fortress, Liuba?"



TSAR ALEXIS MICHAELOVITCH AND NIKON AT TOMB
OF ST. PHILIP IN THE CATHEDRAL OF THE
ASSUMPTION, MOSCOW

Madame Marilov had been chatting animatedly with Philip as they stood by the railing looking up and down the river. At her question, my husband turned involuntarily and looked at me. Liuba? That was the name of Marie's friend. Then this was she after all!

"You will remain some time longer in Moscow?" Made-moiselle Liuba inquired. "Have you enjoyed it? I am glad that we were in the city. My brother has been ill and we came in to be near him."

"We have enjoyed every minute of it," I replied, making a sudden resolve as I saw that the two by the balcony railing had resumed their conversation. "And the weather has been ideal until the past few days. If the clouds clear again we shall stay on awhile longer."

"*If the clouds clear,*" she repeated very slowly, searching my face.

"We met at Prince K.'s house the daughter of Captain Sheikh-Ahary, who made us her confidants."

"Then you have — something —"

"Something for you. When may I deliver it?"

"I know what it is," she said in a low voice. "She promised when I last saw her that she would send it sometime by someone she could trust. I was then under the surveillance of the Petersburg police, and did not dare to bring it with me."

"You are not now under surveillance?"

"Once a suspect, always a suspect — the Third Section never forgets. For some time, however, I have been so fortunate as to have been spared any direct annoyance. My father's position —"

"Liuba, Mr. Houghton has said he will bring his wife to spend a night with you at Shulov."

"That will be delightful. I have been regretting that I must go back to-morrow morning to our estate, as there are many things to be attended to at this time of the year. If you will come to Shulov, I shall be so very glad."

"It will be a great pleasure, will it not, Philip?" I was relieved at this solution of the problem. At Shulov we should not have to see the daughter under the eye of her father.

"Then shall we make it Thursday afternoon? I will meet you at our little station and we shall have time to drive to the Troitsa Monastery before going to the house."

"Oh, you are near to the Trinity Monastery. We had planned to go there."

"We shall be indebted more than ever to Prince K.," I said, as we made an appointment to dine the following evening, not at the town house of the Marilov's, because of the son's illness, but at a café near the Hermitage Gardens. Two days later we were to take an early afternoon train from the Yaroslav station, on the outskirts of the city, to stay a day and a night with Mademoiselle Marilov in the country.

"And you won't fail to bring the puppy?" she urged at the door, as Philip went ahead to see Madame Marilov to her kareta. Then, as they turned the corner of the corridor, "I haven't a pocket anywhere in this ridiculous dress, so I must ask you to keep the letter for me until you come to Shulov."

"Let us hope it will not rain for our excursion into the country," I said, pressing her hand.

"Yes," she replied, smiling, "let us pray that the clouds will clear!"

We were about setting out the next morning for a stroll on the Petrovka, when a messenger came with a note from Madame Marilov, written in French, because, as she explained, "to write in English was for her not easy."

"Madame is herself ill with a sick headache, which means that she will probably not be able to leave her bed in time to dine to-night. Monsieur Marilov begs that we will do him the pleasure to meet him at one o'clock for luncheon at the Troïtska restaurant where it will perhaps interest us to see the — what's this, Philip, the stock brokers?"

"Oh, yes, he was telling about the place yesterday. The bourse is held on the pavement below this great traktir and the brokers complete their transactions over the lunch-table in the café above. It is one of the best restaurants in the city."

"Well, then, I must go back and change my dress if we are going to so mannish a place for lunch," I faltered. But instead of wailing, man-like, over the time he should have to wait while I dressed, my vain husband seconded the suggestion. "Put on your prettiest — I like that blue fluffy one and the black hat."

"Oh, but the blue fluffy one is too wrinkled, I am afraid. I'll see though. Perhaps the hand-maiden pressed it out as I asked her to do." To Phil's gratification, this proved to be the case. "These Russian servants are the most attentive and willing I ever saw," I commended, drawing on my gloves. "I don't suppose this chamber-maid has more than three dollars a month."

"Probably not that. The boots gets two. I asked the courier. The poor fellow looked so peaked when he came up with my shoes the other morning that I gave him thirty

kopeks and he was going to kiss my hand, but I gave him sixty more not to. And *then* you should have seen his face!"

"There are more servants in Petersburg, in proportion to the population, than in any European city. Mrs. Jordan said so. She said they often slept, even in the richest houses, in rooms like closets without a single window, and that they were frequently on duty until two in the morning to serve the late supper."

"And if they came to America, they would not give half the service for twice the money! What did you do with Happy?"

"Left her with the maid. Poor puppy, she doesn't like the days when we go visiting churches and accept invitations to lunch." Until one o'clock we wandered along the Petrovka, looking in the windows of Moscow's Broadway and lower Fifth Avenue. The shops were much superior to Petersburg's—as enticing as those of Vienna and Paris, if the increasing slimness of my pocket-book was any criterion. On a corner near the Opera House, the theatres, and the Metropôle Hotel is the largest department store in the city, a tall building which reminded us of the huge shops of New York and Chicago.

At the door of the traktir we met the Prince's friend, a heavy-set man with an eye for commerce, a coarse jaw, and a suave manner. In an immense room, twelve times the size of an ordinary café, we found the table which M. Marilov had already reserved.

"I have been in the Rheingold restaurant in Berlin," remarked Philip over the zakuska, "but I don't remember that it contains so large a single room as this."

"Perhaps not, though the Rheingold is much larger

than the Troïtska. It seats four thousand if I remember correctly."

"At least the Troïtska is more picturesque." Over a hundred waiters in white shirts and trousers with blue belts, were flitting from table to table, serving to the hundreds of patrons the fish of the Volga and Caspian, the game of Siberia, the fruits and vegetables of Little Russia, the wines of the Caucasus, the Don, and the Crimea.

"My husband tells me that you have a most interesting plant, M. Marilov," I said, trying not to make a wry face over the cold soup — a green pond floating with fish and cucumber dice. "How many workmen have you?" I helped myself to piroghi, tiny pastry shells which, filled with chopped meat, or fish and egg, help to make appetising the most doubtful of porridge concoctions.

"The number varies between winter and summer. When the harvest is past, thousands of muzhiks swarm into the cities to work the next six months in factories. In the winter we employ perhaps three thousand men."

"Do they work in artels?" The two men smiled at the word. "Isn't that right? I am sure I read once that all Russian workmen were members of co-operative bands called artels."

"You are perfectly right, Mrs. Houghton. Your husband and I were but amused that you should be so well informed concerning things commercial."

"But my information does not extend beyond an acquaintance with the term itself. How do they co-operate, please?"

"When the — Won't you have more of the sterlet? No? Or you, Mr. Houghton? That's right — I am glad you appreciate the finest fish that swims the rivers of

Russia. . . . When the village people set out for the city, they choose a manager who negotiates with a factory for the services of all those in the *artel*. This manager often acts as steward also, uniting with other managers, lodged within the same factory tenement, to buy provisions in large quantities. Each workman pays so much in proportion to the mouths he must feed. If there is anything left in the treasury at the end of the season, it is divided equally and the manager is rewarded by an additional commission. The factory pays all the wages for his *artel* to the manager and he dispenses them. The families of the workmen live in tenements provided by the company, where they pay as low as half a ruble a month rent."

"And the wages?" asked Phil. "What does the ordinary steel-worker earn during the six months?"

"About seventy of your American dollars. They are better paid than weavers. Does that seem a low wage to you?" He smiled at my involuntary exclamation. "Out of this amount a temperate workman can save half to take back to the village for the summer months."

"And there are steel-workers in Pittsburgh who earn three times seventy dollars in a month!"

"I should be willing to wager that not many of them save half their wages at that. Still, you cannot compare the wage of the Russian with that of the American. We have proven in our factories here that one Englishman can out-work six *muzhik* hands. And your quick-thinking and working American — how many Englishmen would be needed to equal him?"

"Not less than ten," surmised Philip.

"Not one less. I have been in your Pittsburgh. I know with what intelligence those mill-workers operate.

Their efficient labour is worth forty times the labour of our half-trained factory hands and ten times that of the men I saw in the rolling-mills of Sheffield."

The waiter removed our plates and brought us each a half of a tiny roast chicken, and luscious Kursk tomatoes dressed as a salad. No other vegetable was served throughout the luncheon. For dessert I had an ice; the men ordered a frozen fruit jelly peculiar to Moscow. When we had finished we went into the tea-room where the brokers who had been discussing stocks, industrials and consols over the lunch-table, continued to talk futures and margins over the samovar and cup of China tea. A grey-haired man in uniform came over to speak to our host, and was introduced as the chief of the law department of Moscow province, Procurator B. With a word of apology he began to converse in Russian concerning a matter of evident importance. When he had gone, Gospodin Marilov explained. "Some of my workmen are Revolutionists — many of them are, I fear. Recently they were involved in an intrigue against the Government. There was a riot, and some Government property was destroyed. The provincial law office is making an effort to recover damages from the company, but we shall not pay. If the employers of Revolutionists were to hold themselves responsible for all the harm they do, we should be in what you call 'hot water' all the time. They make enough trouble as it is. Only last week I discharged nearly fifty rollers because I caught them holding a secret meeting behind one of the mills at the noon hour. They were fortunate not to have had some employers, who would have turned them over to the police for a flogging and imprisonment."

As we left the restaurant and walked across the open square we heard feet tramping — feet of soldiers guarding a dejected band of prisoners. M. Marilov stopped a moment and looked closely at the convicts. An ejaculation escaped his lips. "So," he said, looking after the group, "one or two of them have gotten what they deserved. One of those prisoners was the foreman of our No. 5 mill, and I think the man beside him is also one of those I dismissed. Evidently the Secret Service knew them better than I. Well, perhaps in Siberia it will not be so easy for them to get into mischief."

"In Siberia!" I exclaimed, thinking he must be joking. "Would they send men to Siberia just for holding a political meeting?"

"They are sent by the thousand for just that. And where is there a better place for them? The Revolutionists are responsible for the rivers of blood deluging the country. They want 'reform,' but their propaganda has set the nation back fifteen years. We are worse off in many ways to-day than we were before Nicholas II came to the throne, and are the laughing-stock of the world."

"Not the laughing-stock, but —" Philip flashed me a warning glance, and I did not finish my sentence. Just ahead of us some women were running alongside the prisoners, with small children hanging to their worn skirts and others in their arms. They were calling to the men within the barricade of soldiers, and crying aloud. The convicts scarcely raised their eyes, but I saw one of them, he who had been foreman of No. 5, draw his hand across his eyes, and stumble as if his body and brain were sick.

"Those women are the wives of the convicts. They follow along this way during the public degradation of

those who have been sentenced for deportation. Some of the wives go into exile with their husbands. The Government permits it, for otherwise the country would be overrun with paupers without means of support."

"And on the road to Siberia, who provides for them — the mothers and children?"

"Oh, the Government lets them sleep in the prisons at the different 'stations' and they eat the prison fare."

"But those are the vilest of underground affairs, are they not? How are the innocent families of decent workmen protected from such hideous surroundings?"

"Protected? Oh, I don't suppose any effort is made to protect them. They have to endure it if they choose to go into exile with their husbands."

"And if they don't choose, they would remain home to starve with their little ones?" Philip shook his head at me, but I was too indignant to care for his warning or M. Marilov's feelings, if he had any.

"People outside of Russia," he explained, smiling at my resentment, "cannot understand the conditions here. You cannot judge our lower classes by your own. Here, muzhiks and most workmen are — cattle. They haven't the capacity to govern themselves and they should be taught not to try."

"And the 'intelligentsia' — your students and professional men and women?"

"They are the most dangerous of all. I believe I would willingly let my son and daughter go to prison if I found them guilty of the sedition which is becoming the fashion among the young people of Russia. It is they in every case who have incited the assassinations which have occurred so frequently during the past five years."

"And the men they murdered — were they exemplary, the governor of Moscow, for instance?"

"The uncle of the Most High. No, the Grand Duke Serge did some things which were not right."

"The soldiers shivered for want of the warm clothing which bulged his pockets."

"So it was reported. We do not hold our Imperial Family to the same account as those not born in the purple."

We had reached the Red Square, "red" because to the Muscovites it is beautiful, and, in Russian, red and beautiful are synonymous. Near the cathedral of the Blessed St. Basil we parted, M. Marilov affably expressing the hope that we should see each other again before we left. That evening we sent a bouquet to Madame, his wife, who returned a gracious note of acknowledgment.

With few exceptions, the veneer of Russian courtesy glosses a primal cruelty and insensibility to others' sufferings, actually as savage as that which inspired the barbarisms of the ancestral Scythian and Sarmatian. This truism has often been uttered, but it is none the less appalling. As recipients of the kindly hospitality of well-mannered Russians, it had been almost impossible for us to reconcile their whole-hearted generosity with this pessimistic assertion as to the real core of their natures. Given the power to assert authority, the Slav is possessed with an inborn mania to swing the lash. If the blood starts on the back of the victim — it is God who has willed it. With them, the names God and Fate are interchangeable. "Unto each man happens what was decided at his birth." "The wolf seizes the destined sheep." "What is to be cannot be avoided." Upon the convenient head of



THE RED SQUARE, CHURCH OF ST. BASIL AND REDEEMER GATE, MOSCOW



Fate are heaped the results of sin. Personal, moral obligation is foreign to the Russian character. Pagans at heart, they are fatalists in every circumstance of life. If a Russian steals — Fate directed him to steal; if he lies, the words were put into his mouth — he is but the instrument of Fate; if he is oppressed — why resist? — Fate guides the hand of the oppressor. If he is in want, why struggle to better himself? It is God's will. If a fellow-man is tortured, if he gasps and sickens in a cell under the ground — why attempt his release? He is in the resistless toils of an irrevocable Power. If he is exiled to life-agony — he was foreordained to suffer, and who can gainsay God and Fate? If there are those who are compassionate and resentful at the thought of unspeakable wrongs, it is because the poison of Fatalism has begun to work out of their blood. When Russia's veins flow free of the curse of her pagan ancestry, she may be counted a civilised nation.

“And still,” pursued Philip, as we came out of the church of St. Basil, “in what civilised nation will you meet a sweeter, simpler-minded, more generous people? People more unaffected or more gentle? I read a book once, ‘Russia, the Puzzle.’ I doubt if the enigma is ever solved.”

“I think, perhaps, it is the very primitiveness of their natures which makes them both unfeeling and lovable. For lovable they certainly are.”

The monument to the artistic tastes of John the Terrible reared itself in hideous arrogance behind us. Philip never tired searching its towers and cupolas for new forms and outrageous colours. “Oh, do look just once more, jená, at that sprouted onion behind the yellow pine-apple

cheese. You see, just to the right of the tallest salt shaker?"

"Salt shaker!" I disputed. "I always supposed that was a vinegar cruet. At any rate, you won't deny that the red and white cupola is a Turk's turban? Napoleon called the edifice a mosque. Could anything be more uncomplimentary to Turkey?"

"Or anything more libellous than to assert that Italians were responsible for it? Miss Meakin says two Russian architects perpetrated the monstrosity. I believe it. Italians planned the Kremlin. I don't think they were capable of foisting this architectural ogre upon innocent posterity."

"It's a fitting sepulchre for St. John the Idiot."

"An excellently designed tomb for feeble-minded saints, or lunatics of any description."

We spent the rest of the afternoon in the Romanov House. Under its ornate roof Tsar Michael was born. Aside from this fact, it is interesting as a museum, for in it have been preserved toys, primers, furniture, garments, and household utensils of the seventeenth century, before Peter's westernising influences had been felt in Russia.

When we left the Kremlin we had passed through the Redeemer Gate to the Place Rouge. This time Philip did not forget to remove his hat in deference to the old, dim painting of the Saviour which hangs high above it. It is the Holy of Holies to the Orthodox, and heads are bared and prayers are said before it all day long. One day we were about to enter the Kremlin from the Red Square. We passed the taper-seller to go through this Holy Gate, Happy being snugly tucked under my arm. But the candle vender hailed us with vigour. He ap-

proached Phil threateningly, signalling with graphic effect that we were trespassing — but how? We stood dumbly regarding the guardian of the gate. Our apathy enraged him all the more. Losing all patience, he sprang towards Philip, who dodged and prepared to defend himself. It was, however, only a straw hat which the old man sought, tearing it angrily from Phil's head and throwing it to the pavement. Then, crossing himself, he pointed with dramatic emphasis to the picture above, with the rude lamp swinging before it. "Oh, I beg your pardon," said Philip politely, picking up the offending hat and hunting his pockets for a piece of silver. "I hope you'll believe the slight was not intended — we didn't know, you see." To prove his penitence, he laid a coin on the candle table, and we turned towards the gate. At this juncture, Happy came into the picture. The sight of her aroused the old man as does the toreador's cloak the bull. Shouting at us vehement Russian, he leaped across the gateway and barred it with loyal arms. Then to make his meaning quite clear, he seized Happy's collar and tried to drag her from me. I held on lustily. Not for all the zealots in Muscovy would I surrender my puppy. "Let go!" I cried. "I don't want to go through your old gate. Come on, Philip. There are four other entrances to the Kremlin. I guess we don't have to patronise this one." And we had gone off, Phil exceedingly amused — I, very indignant.

"Well, you can't blame the old codger, jená. The dog is evidently an unclean animal in the eyes of the Orthodox. In other words, Hap is persona non grata on holy ground. We'll have to enter the Kremlin some other way when she is one of the party."

The steps and doorway of the chapel of the Iberian

Virgin were thronged, as we had seen them thronged every time we passed that way. Leaving or returning to Moscow, every Russian comes hither to render his homage to the miraculous ikon enthroned within an inner sanctuary.

The modish, the sick, the sorrowful, kneel in common humility before the chapel door, or inside, if fortune favours them, and the crowd is not too dense.

But to-day the press was greater than ever. We halted our drosky to discern, if possible, the cause of the special demonstration. The *isvostchik* seized the moment to kneel on the crowded pavement. It was evidently a holy day. . . . An officer shouldered a market-woman. . . . Two little girls found a place beside a mendicant. Each petitioner prayed with fervour for wealth, success, healing, comfort. The Russian asks rather for temporal blessings than for the salvation of his soul. A blue coach drawn by six horses drew up to the curb. The worshippers arose and stood back as some monks came from the chapel carrying a painting, smothered in gold and flashing jewels. The door of the carriage was opened, the faded picture was placed on the seat, two monks got in, the door was closed by a bare-headed footman and the horses started through the arch of the Sunday gate. The Iberian Mother of God had been sent for by one who was sick and who would be made well. For the visit of the miracle ikon the family of the invalid would pay the equivalent of two dollars and a half, and make a gift also to the monks who are its guardians. For centuries this holy painting has been venerated, first in Georgia, the country of its nativity; then on Mount Athos in Macedonia; and finally in Moscow, where it was brought at the invitation of the father of Peter the Great.



Chapter XIII

THE CHATELAINE OF SHULOV

SMILING and lovely, Mademoiselle Marilov greeted us at the little station on her father's estate. "The sun did come out, did it not? I am so glad, for now you will enjoy all the more the drive to the Monastery of St. Serge." We climbed into the carriage, and the grey horses started forward at a word from the big kutscher in the padded livery of the Marilovs.

"Please tell us something about the monastery," said Phil, confessing ignorance. "I know it is the richest of the three lavras in Russia and the second holiest. Madame has imparted that much. But I don't believe she knows any more about it, do you, Joyce?"

"Not a syllable. Moscow has been too engrossing for me to find time to read it up." Happy, bravely arrayed in a new Russia leather harness, had succeeded in scrambling into Mademoiselle Marilov's lap, where she dropped defiantly, eyeing me with some doubt as to the security of her position. I tried to apologise for her presumption, but Mademoiselle cuddled her close, and would not give her up.

"What shall we do with her when we go into the monastery?" I asked, and related our experience at the Redeemer Gate.

"Oh, we shall have no trouble there. I know the abbot and, if necessary, we will ask special permission to let Happy enter as a puppy pilgrim." As she laughed

at her own sally, her grey eyes glistened with mirth and her fair skin grew rosy as the pink dress she wore. Her hair lay against her temples in glossy brown waves. Her hands were smooth and fine, her figure supple as a Norway birch. From that moment she was to us the Pretty Lady. "You want to hear something about the Trinity-Sergius Monastery?" she continued in her pleasant voice, the words ever so slightly accented. "It is the Russian Canterbury, you know, and was founded by Sergius in 1340. It has been besieged by Tatars and Poles. It has sheltered fleeing princes. One of its churches (there are at least a dozen) is the tomb of St. Sergius himself, and thousands come to his shrine each year, as they have been coming for hundreds of years past. There — if you lean this way you can see one of the towers on the great wall."

We drove directly to the Trinity Church to see the shrine of St. Sergius, which is of pure silver. That of Alexander Nevsky weighs over a ton and a half, while this tomb of Sergius contains less than half a ton of the same metal. Nevertheless it was extremely beautiful, and its interest was enhanced by the display of relics and paintings of the saint. One of the pictures painted on wood has been carried numberless times into battle and is credited with miraculous victories. The sacristy's riches rival those of the Moscow Kremlin. Each monarch has bestowed some gift of surpassing splendour upon this fortress-shrine. Crucifixes, staffs, robes, altar-cloths, caskets are encrusted and embroidered with deep borders of gems. However, it is not these which the pilgrims press closest to see, but the simple monk's robe of the founder, and the wooden utensils from which

he ate and drank. By the old belfry near the church where Sergius was visited of the Virgin, a pilgrim family were sitting on the terrace, munching black bread. "They have probably come miles to make their devotions," said Mademoiselle Liuba. She paused a moment and spoke to the father. He replied ingenuously and went back to his bottle of vodka.

"They have come from a *derévnyá* not far this side of Tver," Mademoiselle interpreted. "They have been walking for weeks, and have just arrived to-day. Poor things, I doubt if they have much to eat now that their long pilgrimage is ended." She opened her purse and turned back. We saw her put a piece of money into the astonished mother's hand, the entire family crowding about to see and touch the coin, and breaking into a torrent of words. But they did not address themselves to their benefactor. Their gratitude seemed to be engulfed in amazement.

"I don't believe they thanked you," I said indignantly.

"Thanked me? No, I don't believe they did. But their poor bodies will thank me. Did you see that little starved baby? To-night it can have a bowl of buckwheat groats."

"And the father, another bottle of vodka?" queried pessimistic Phil.

"Oh, the father would have the vodka anyway, even if there was no food for any of them."

"Do they allow the pilgrims to drink their brandy within the walls of the monastery?" I glanced back, astonished at the rashness of the father, still tippling. Mademoiselle looked half-amused.

"I doubt if the monks could be shocked by intemper-

ance. Someone has said that the five hundred monasteries of Russia are 'but houses of refuge for the indolent'; he could have added, 'and for the drunken.' "

We turned the corner of the cloister where a monk in his black gown was playing with Happy, who had been left in his care while we entered the churches. Another brother stood by a pillar watching the puppy antics. Several more were drinking tea under an arbour. Besides the samovar and the tea-cups, there were tall bottles standing on the table. From one of them bearing the imperial eagle on the label, a monk poured out a gobletful of white liquid. "Oh," I said, "it was only water after all." Mademoiselle and Phil chuckled at my innocence.

"Yes, Russian 'water of life'—brandy, probably eighty per cent. pure alcohol—and they drink it by the gobletful!" supplemented my sophisticated spouse.

A little river straying through the garden without the lavra walls invited us to sit awhile by its banks. "Have you a pocket in *that* dress?" I asked the Pretty Lady. We sat under a lime-tree while Phil and Happy roamed upstream. I opened my handbag and drew out the thick envelope which I had brought all the way from Petersburg, by way of the Volga, Nizhni Novgorod, and Moscow. "Will you take it now? I cannot rest until I have seen it safely in your hands."

"You were good to bring it. The responsibility was not inconsiderable."

"We understood that we were the bearers of a message which entailed some risk; still, we were very willing to be of service to Marie—and the cause." Mademoiselle ran a hatpin along the crease of the envelope and

tore it open. As she turned its contents into her lap, I started with amazement. "Money?" I exclaimed. "Not all that money! We haven't been carrying an envelope full of fifty- and hundred-ruble notes all this time!"

Mademoiselle held the bills between her fingers and counted: "One hundred, two hundred, two hundred and fifty, three hundred and fifty, four, six, ten, twelve hundred and fifty, thirteen hundred, fifteen, sixteen — there are two thousand rubles here — two thousand rubles to buy books and food and warm clothes for our comrades in exile. Is she not generous, our little Marie? This is part of her inheritance from her mother. I believe she would give it all if her father need not know."

"But why did she send it this way? There would surely have been less danger of its being stolen if she had mailed a cheque."

"I am afraid you do not know our Government postal system, Mrs. Houghton. My mail is constantly opened. If I were mailed a cheque for any amount the sender could never be sure that I would receive it. If it did not lead to my arrest on suspicion of receiving funds to further the work of our party, I should be fortunate. No, such gifts and communications as this must be sent from hand to hand. Marie probably did not tell you just what she was asking you to bring me, because she feared you would hesitate to carry so large an amount if you knew what the envelope held. But you have done us a service, a great, great service," she breathed, laying her hand upon mine. "Many of our comrades in exile are prisoners in settlements where their only companions are ignorant, diseased, suspicious ostiaks. The Govern-

ment allows them three rubles a month for food. There are few ways of earning money in those remote villages. They would starve, they often do starve, without help from our organisation. Many of the exiles are teachers, young doctors, writers. Their one plea is for books — books to read that they may forget the future as well as the present. The money you have brought will feed the body and soul of many, many of my comrades.”

“How will you send it to them? How do you dare send it to them?”

“Oh, the Government does not prohibit exiles from receiving assistance. Only it must be done secretly at this end, unless we wish to come under the suspicion of the Political Police who are always hoping to bring still more of us into their toils. But we have ways to reach the unfortunates without great danger to ourselves. It would weary you to mention them all.”

A beggar coming from behind a tree startled us both. Mademoiselle Marilov clutched the envelope tighter, and I looked about for Phil. To my relief he was turning back. I called to him, and he waved his hat. The beggar, seeing the approach of a muscular figure, slunk away.

“Do you suppose he would have robbed us? He had the eye of a thief.”

“Or a spy,” remarked Mademoiselle, rising. When Philip had joined us we went back to the road where the carriage was waiting. There, in conversation with the coachman, was our beggar again. He fell at Phil’s feet, and begged “in Christi radi.” Phil’s hand went to his pocket. “Give him nothing,” said Mademoiselle quickly.



THE CHATEAU AT SHULOV

Philip looked surprised, but obeyed. In a few moments we had left the creature behind us.

As Mademoiselle seemed inclined to ignore the incident, we did not broach the subject during the long drive to the estate. "I love to be in the country," she said, as we passed fields of buckwheat and rye and blue-flowered flax. In other fields, pink and white yarrow, and crimson crane's bill peeped between the rustic fences. We passed peasants driving oxen, and others returning on foot from their harvesting. One young woman rode a shaggy small horse. Over her shoulder she carried a rake. Her bare legs showed beneath a short cotton skirt. "I love the country," repeated our hostess, "but it is not the fashion. Many of my friends would wish never to have it known that they lived at all upon their country places. It is a Russian peculiarity, and a foolish one. We have nearly all come up from the peasantry. One need not be ashamed of it. That is the house through those trees, with the izbás of the tenantry at the foot of the knoll."

We saw a large low house extending over a shady plateau. Several outbuildings drew back among the trees as if in deference to the dignity of the main dwelling. A muzhik opened the gate, making a low obeisance to the daughter of his landlord. At the door, the servants gathered about to assist us alight, to take our hand baggage, and to show us through the long hallway to our bed-chamber. When dinner had been served in the dining-hall adjoining the great drawing-room, we sauntered about the farm in the lingering twilight. In the smoke-house there were hams of pig and mutton, whole geese, and bacon, which during the previous winter had

been smoked with the fumes of dried tree and herb leaves until they had attained the pungent tastiness dear to the Russian palate. The kvas brewer of the estate had been making the favourite beverage and as we stopped to look into the miniature brewery, Mademoiselle detailed the process. Barley-meal, honey, and salt are covered over with boiling water and steeped for half a day. When it has been strained and set to ferment for several days, it is strained again and then bottled. Kvas is an important part of the Russian household's *ménu*, as it is used not only as a drink but as an ingredient in various dishes. Casks of fermented cabbage and beet-root, and barrels of vegetable oils, used on fast days instead of lard and butter, game cheeses, more casks of salted beef and fish quite filled another out-house. At the rear of the house there were the several servants' kitchens made necessary by the distinctions of caste, almost as pronounced here as among the Hindus. One of the agents of the estate was distributing loaves of bread to the farm-hands who lived in the cottages under the hill. The dairyman, the gardener, the stove-heater, the brewer, the confectioner, the coachman, the grooms had each sent a representative to receive his family's dole of bread, baked in the brick ovens of the master's house.

Towering above the other buildings was the wind-mill furnishing motive power for the flour-mill, which ground all the grain for the estate. Near the peasant settlement of weather-grey huts was the vodka brewery, surrounded by mounds of potatoes, out of which the wretched stuff known as potato brandy is made. The Government having a monopoly of the vodka trade, the product of even these private distilleries is sold to a representa-

tive of the State. The blacksmith shop was closed. I should like to have looked into a Russian blacksmith shop. "It would amuse you to see the currency sometimes tendered in return for the smithy's services," said Mademoiselle. "A loaf of bread or a measure of buckwheat is offered for the forging of a shoe or the mending a cart-wheel."

We went back by the green-houses, the poultry-yard and the cobbler's shop to the chateau. Until the sun went down about ten o'clock, we sat on the porch. A late moon hung pale and lustreless above the fields. In the village street below us the peasants were singing around a bonfire, and we could hear the strumming of a balalaïka.

A faint scratching awakened us. Happy sat up and barked. The scratching continued. When I went to the door, a maid in a pink dress presented a jug of steaming water. When we were partly dressed there came more scratching. Again I responded. This time it was a servant in a red dress who had been sent by her mistress with a bunch of flowers. The tray of tea and bread was brought by still another woman-servant who said good-morning and kissed our hands and the hem of my dress.

Mademoiselle Liuba was superintending the fruit-drying when we came upon her in the yard, her face shaded by a rough farm hat. She stood in the centre of a circle of girls, whose fingers were busy stemming berries which were heaped in hand-woven baskets beside the benches.

"Come sit in the midst of rural Russia," invited the daughter of the house. "We are preparing fruit for the winter. Perhaps you would like to watch us." She spoke to one of the helpers, who rose to fetch another

bench. Returning with it, her foot caught in a basket of currants and sent the freshly picked fruit rolling across the brick square. For a moment, she was the picture of rustic despair. Then she threw herself at the feet of her mistress, and bursting into sobs, besought forgiveness. Again and again she seized her hands to kiss them, while her companions demonstrated their sympathy by chattering all at once, and shaking their heads. With utmost patience, Mademoiselle accepted the show of remorse, speaking kindly to the prostrate figure and bidding her get up and prove her repentance by collecting the scattered fruit and washing it anew.

But it was some time before the unhappy servant could sufficiently control herself to resume her work, and her companions continued to offer their condolence with such earnestness that the upsetting of a basket of currants threatened to demoralise labour for the rest of the morning.

Mademoiselle Liuba delegated a housekeeper to supervise the talkative group, and came to walk with us in the pine-wood.

"I want to tell you," she said, "that the beggar we saw near the lavra is undoubtedly an agent of the Secret Service. I thought so yesterday. I am almost sure of it to-day, for I found him this morning asking for bread at the door of the summer kitchen. Though he is well disguised, I think I have seen him before. Did you notice his peculiar eyes? I feel that it is right to warn you that he may have been sent to watch you. I should have been more discreet than to ask you to come here to see me. Your visitors at the hotel were probably known to the police. As I have told you, I am under constant

suspicion. To visit me here alone was not wise. I should not have asked you to come." Her distress was so real that our chief desire was to comfort her.

"It was not you who suggested our coming, but your mother, you may remember. If the police know anything at all of our movements, they must be aware that we have lunched in public with your father."

"Certainly my father is known to be in entire sympathy with the Government. Nevertheless, I am equally as well known to the Third Section as one whose interest in the reform movement has involved me—in an arrest."

"In an arrest? Does your father know?" I recalled his unfatherly words.

"No, fortunately. I believe he would cease to call me daughter if he did. Of course I am not dependent for support. I have my profession."

"Marie said you had been of great assistance to your father in structural designing."

"I finished a piece of work last month. I had several technical students under me who were also women. Some contractors always call for women because they are invariably sober and alert." She took off her broad-brimmed hat. As she raised her hand to brush back a wave of chestnut hair, I tried to imagine a hand so fine and white holding a draughting tool or directing the placement of bolts and beams.

"Where were you in prison?" asked Phil.

"In Finland. It was not for long. I was out in a week." As we did not wish to increase her anxiety for us, we said nothing of our own experience.

Jerry had warned us that our arrest in Petersburg would undoubtedly lead to a more or less strict super-

vision of our movements elsewhere. In Russia, the awakened eye of suspicion never closes. But, though Mademoiselle Liuba's acquaintance with police tactics constituted her a judge whose opinion was not to be lightly disregarded, nevertheless I was more inclined to the belief that the beggar who had startled us in the garden was actuated by pure thievery, rather than by a desire to spy upon Phil and me. He had stood behind the tree while we counted the ruble notes. If Phil had not appeared, I was confident he would have attempted robbery.

"I am doubly sorry if your coming here on a mission from my comrade has brought you under suspicion," continued our hostess. She began to tear the leaves from a twig she had broken, and I thought she flushed ever so slightly. "I had thought perhaps you might — but there is no use to speak of it now. I could not ask it. It would but add to the risk you may already be running by coming here to Shulov." Her fingers at the collar of her blouse fumbled a locket. She stood looking into the wood, her sweet eyes lifted as if to meet an invisible face.

"Tell us," I said quietly. "Is there anything we can do for you, Mademoiselle Marilov? If there is, we want to do it, don't we, Philip?"

"Even if spying beggars track our every step."

Mademoiselle smiled.

"I believe you would. You are young and in love with — everything. I think you believe, too, in our movement to save Russia, and would help us if you could. But this I thought of asking — I lay thinking of it in the night — was something just for me — and one other. It would be selfish, too selfish to ask it. It might lead you into

unpleasant complications. If the police already suspect that you are in touch with Revolutionaries, this visit I was going to ask you to pay would increase the risk of your being sent out of the country with twenty-four hours' notice. It is impossible. Come, let us go back. Luncheon will soon be ready." She turned to go, but I put out my hand, as Phil stopped his whittling and looked up.

"This visit — it means much to you. Forgive me if I go too far. But I believe the one you wish us to see is the one — is perhaps someone who would give his life to be near you this moment." Her lips trembled and she turned her head. "Perhaps, of course we don't know the least thing about it, but perhaps this someone has been sent away and perhaps when we leave Moscow we could go to see him and send you word of him. Is that what you lay thinking of in the night?"

She laid her hands on my shoulders. "It is a sweet inquisition," she said. "I want to tell you all about it. It would lighten my heart just to utter the words. But if my yearning to hear of — someone should involve you and your dearest, how could I bear it?"

"Let us sit here and talk it over. Philip, you may go for a walk with Happy."

"No, no, you shall not send him off. I should like his counsel."

"I am honoured by your request," declared Philip. He too had come under the spell of this fair Revolutionary. Her cheeks grew pinker as she fixed her eyes on the toe of her white shoe, and began:

"When you said last night that you were leaving soon for Russia Minor, one thought possessed my mind — and

my heart, for in the south a comrade of mine is exiled, not so very many miles from Poltava. He teaches a village school and is free to come and go within the limits of that village. If he should put his foot over the line, he would be sent in a moment to Siberia. He is innocent — he has done nothing, absolutely nothing.” She raised her head bravely and looked from Phil to me. “In St. Petersburg at the University, he was the leader of the students who resisted the attempts of the Government to interfere with the conduct of their own affairs. He came then under the displeasure of the Political Police. He was watched. His rooms were frequently searched for incriminating literature. One day, the gendarmes found something inside a couch pillow. It was an uncensored copy of ‘The French Revolution.’ When he returned from a lecture, they showed him a warrant for his arrest. He said, ‘Very well, I will go. But let me change my shoes and gather some linen together.’ The gendarmes looked into his bed-chamber again. They saw no door leading from it into the hall. So they let him go in alone, while they waited, the three of them, in his sitting-room. Several minutes passed. At first they had heard him moving about. But suddenly they realised that he had been gone for more minutes than were necessary just to put on other shoes and pack a bag with fresh garments. When they pulled open the door, the room was empty. It was some time before they discovered the crack in the wall-paper of the closet, where he had had a door cut in anticipation of just such an exigency. By the time the three dullards had finished searching the house, my — comrade was behind the counter in a butter store, ready to serve customers. When he first came under the notice

of the police he had arranged with the proprietor that if necessary he might take refuge in the disguise of a clerk's blouse. For some months, he had carried constantly a forged passport. They are to be purchased of Jewish counterfeiters on the frontier. He shaved his moustache and dyed his hair to suit the details of the passport description. In this guise he worked for some weeks in the dairyman's store until he could get away to Moscow. It was not long before he became here, as in Petersburg, the centre of a group of students who looked to him as their captain and adviser. At the meetings of our organisation, held at the rear of a furniture shop where we entered presumably as customers, I learned to know him. When he spoke to us of Russia's future, we were thrilled as with the words of a prophet. There was no mind so keen as his in planning the relief of unfortunates; no heart so quick to give practical sympathy; no one more alert to avoid suspicion. As a student he had a brilliant record in his chosen study of Oriental languages; already he had made some notable translations from the Persian. His father was a priest, and since he, the son, had refused to enter the church and pursue its hypocrisies, he had been disowned by his people. You may know that the white priests are like the tribe of Levi. Son succeeds father — daughters marry the sons of other priests.

“For a year he had been in Moscow. Many times we had seen each other. That love grew up between us, but made our position the more unhappy, for here, marriage was an impossibility. He could follow no lucrative occupation openly without endangering his freedom. Being a priest's son, he was of course poor. But I—I was not poor. I met him one night on the terrace of the

Kremlin to beg that he would take the money I brought and try to get across the German border where I could join him and we might be married. He is proud. At first he would not take my rubles. But at last he yielded, and we lingered a long time making our plans. The garden of the Kremlin was our Gethsemane. When we said good-night, it was for the last time. He was taken the next day."

The low voice faltered. I sat silent while she struggled with the tears. Phil got to his feet and began to pace back and forth with his head down and his hands clenched behind him. When she had mastered her quivering lips she went on: "He has been gone eleven months. I have had two letters. The last came nine weeks ago. He was ill, too ill to work as he must do in the summer in order to eke out his teacher's salary of the winter. But he implores me not to write. His record is already shadowed by his escape in Petersburg. His correspondence is closely watched,—so closely that those known to be his intimates must fall under the shadow in which he lives. For my mother's sake I do not wish to risk exile. The disgrace would kill her. There is another reason, too. While I am free, there is always the thought—but I will not speak of that. It is but a hopeless dream of mine. . . . A woman coming from his village brought me the last letter in a bundle of embroideries. She buys from the peasants and sells to shops in Moscow. It is there—" She swept the wood with a comprehensive glance, leaning forward a little to see beyond a fallen stump. "That—Román lives, at this woman's house. If it had not been for mother I should



LIUBA, IN PEASANT DRESS

have gone to him when I heard he was ill. Many times I have dreamed of his face if I should open the door of his room."

Philip stood kicking at the pine needles. His jaw was tense and I could see the muscles working in his cheek. He turned suddenly to Mademoiselle Marilov. "Tell us," he said almost harshly, "tell us what message we shall take to the teacher in the village of —"

"Of Arminsk," she breathed and glanced again quickly about the wood. "So you will go!" she cried, seizing Phil's hand and mine, as she rose. "Ah, you do not know what it will mean to me — and to him! There are things I have wanted to send him — some of the fruit-wine I have been bottling, and books that I have been buying for him, little by little. And I can send him the letters which every, every day I have written since he was sent away. Now he will know that I have not forgotten. Ah, how that has hurt — the thought that he might believe — I did not — remember!" With swimming eyes she took my face between her palms and kissed me. My cheeks, too, were wet. She drew back. "I have made you cry! Oh, I am selfish — selfish. Forgive me. I should not have told you. You have come here as my guests and I have made you sad!" She held out her hands to Philip. "Will you forgive me, Mr. Houghton — my own memories have absorbed me. I had no right to burden you. Neither have I a right to let you risk annoyance and — and serious inconvenience for my sake. Please tell me that you will forget this hour — forget that I ever alluded to — Román and to the possibility of your helping us. It was an imposition. I—" She

had not withdrawn her hands. Phil took them more firmly in his grasp and looked down at her with resolution written in the stern lines of his face.

"Mademoiselle Marilov," he said, and he was very dear to me at that moment, "nothing hard has ever come into my life, nor into Joyce's, my wife's. Happiness, ease, love have been our portion. We have not counted much in the scheme of things. No fellow-creature has ever needed us — as you need us now. I think perhaps it is about time that we did something for somebody besides ourselves. Someone who is brave and who has proved himself a battler for the right is ill. You do not know how ill. What he has done has counted in his world. He has not been an idler. He is worth half-a-dozen useless fellows like myself. You have told us where he is. We are going to find him — Joyce and I. Even if you forbid us, we are going. Since we are, you may as well let us take what you have to send." I opened my lips to speak, but Mademoiselle Liuba shook her head.

"No, my dear friends. You must not dream of it. I do not know what I have been thinking of. Without doubt you would be detained — you might even be imprisoned a few days, for consorting with an exiled Revolutionist, who, in the eyes of the Government, is more than that — a man who was once a fugitive from justice."

"But we need not go to the village ostensibly to see him. We can find a pretext. You spoke of women who make embroideries. Is it impossible that we should be interested to study peasant industries, and go to Arminsk to buy examples of the work?" Phil nodded his approbation. For a moment, hope glistened in the girl's eyes, only to be obscured.

"It is true, you might see Román at the house of the woman with whom he lives — Kirsanov is her name. She would take you among the women who embroider. The motive of your visit might be hidden. But if you went, there was something more momentous I was going to ask of you. And if you had acceded to that, it is still more to be feared that you would have been held by the police or ordered out of the country immediately. In my impetuosity, in my great desire, encouraged by your sympathy, I had almost lost sight of the real danger into which such an errand would precipitate you. I should have kept my resolve and said nothing. Once more I ask you — forgive my selfishness."

"And you really think our sympathies are so lightly engaged that the possibility of a few hours in gaol, or ejection, can turn us from that village? Perhaps the one you love is not only ill but in need of ordinary comforts. Think what a portion of the money we brought from Petersburg might mean to him, sick and exiled!" I was thoroughly enlisted by the romance of it all and did not intend to be denied.

Phil stood tearing bits of bark from the tree at my back.

"Did you ever think," he said slowly, "that it might be possible even yet to realise the plans you made that night on the bank of the Moskva?"

"Ah, what made you think of that?" cried the sweetheart of Román. "It is the thought which never leaves my brain. In the daytime I plan, at night I dream it. What made you think of that?"

"Because — perhaps we can help you when we go to that village — not so very far from Poltava."

In a moment I saw what he meant. "Help Román to leave Arminsk for a town over the border where they can meet and be married. That is what you are thinking of, Philip. Ah, now you cannot deny that there is reason enough for us to go to Arminsk, Mademoiselle Liuba. Your lover is there sickening for his liberty, and you. Perhaps he will die. If we can save him for you, do you suppose we are not going to make the effort?" The slim pretty shape hid its face against the rough coat of a fatherly pine, quivering with silent sobs. The strain, the conflict of emotions had shattered her control.

"Oh, don't let her cry," murmured Phil, distressed.

"Don't cry," I said, putting my arm about her. "You will have much to do before we leave. This afternoon we must begin to pack the boxes of wine and books. And there are all those letters to be gathered into a bundle, and to-day's letter to write."

At last she grew quiet, and none too soon, for her eyes were scarcely dry before a maid came running and calling eagerly to her mistress. She paled, then flushed, then turned to us, relieved, as the girl told her story. "What is it?" I asked, fearing — I scarcely knew what.

"Good news," she answered, smiling. "My fears about the beggar were groundless. He has just been taken in the muzhik settlement for thievery. If he were really a spy, I think he would not have carried his impersonation quite so far as to rob our poor tenants." She turned again to the servant and questioned her rapidly. "I am so, so glad," she said. "The District Police know him. He has been arrested before for robbing the pilgrims who come to the monastery. If he is not a spy, if you have not been under surveillance in com-

ing here, the risk in going to Arminsk would of course be lessened."

"Then it is settled," I exclaimed, "and you are not going to worry any more. We shall have a happy afternoon getting ready the precious boxes."

"There are no words to thank you," she said as we embraced and cried a little on each other's shoulder, woman-fashion. "To think that yesterday we were almost strangers! You won't go to-night. There is no reason to hurry into Moscow. It will be such a pleasure to have you awhile longer, and —"

"And besides," interrupted our wise Philip, "one cannot write in a few moments all that, under such circumstances, it is necessary to write."

"Nor have I said all that I must say if you are really going," added the daughter of the Marilovs.

Another servant came to say that luncheon had long been ready.

"Luncheon?" I queried. "I had forgotten so prosaic an institution existed."

"Would you not like to have it here?" She gave an order and the girl ran off to the chateau. In a few minutes, willing hands had laid the cloth on the pine needles in the pungent wood.

The letter which Mademoiselle Liuba drew from her dress and read to us fixed our determination to hasten on at once to the south. "I sometimes feel," ran the words of the exile, Petrovsky, "that, as my spirit and heart are broken, so is my body breaking also. I am too ill now to labour in the fields. In the evening, I sit watching the harvesters come back to the sélo. . . . Their strength makes me weak. . . . Nevertheless,

I am still strong enough to resist impious thoughts which force themselves upon me. Each night I pray for courage that the succeeding day may not prove me less strong. . . . Ah, Liubenka, if I could see you before I must go!" No further message had come in the intervening two months. Apprehension haunted us as we made preparations and laid plans for the relief and final release of the exile. What if it was too late when we reached the house of the woman called Kirsanov!

"We need not stay a day in Moscow," I said, infused with the spirit of our crusade and forgetting that I had not explored half the odd corners and old marts which I had anticipated seeing upon our return from Shulov.

"We leave here to-morrow. We can pack and be on the train by evening. That should bring us to Poltava and Arminsk Monday or Tuesday." Phil had a timetable before him. "Monday or Tuesday," he repeated, looking up. "We'll get a letter back to you at the earliest moment. By this time next week. . . ."

"I cannot believe it. The year has been so long . . . and now two have come all the way from America to help accomplish the thing I have dreamed of!" She leaned her bare elbows on the porch railing, her fingers lacing and interlacing as she gazed into the dusk. Happy, sensing the moment's emotion, jumped from Phil's lap, and stood with two paws on her friend's knee staring into her eyes. "Little creature," she murmured, stroking the small head, "my Román's hand will touch you, too!"



Chapter XIV

FOR THE GOOD OF THE EMPIRE

*I*N the night, we passed through Tula, famed abroad rather for its proximity to the estate of Tolstoi, the reformed and the reformer, than for its important manufactories of small-arms, snuff-boxes, and samovars. Early morning brought us a sight of Orel, the grain market; of the Black-Earth country; of apple trees; of level miles of corn and wheat; of sloping thatched roofs, and poverty-sad muzhiks. In this part of Russia the nightingales sing. Kursk, perched above the river Tus-kora, looked down on our slow-moving train. We had chosen not to leave Moscow by the Petersburg-Odessa express, because of the inconvenient hour of its arrival in Kharkov. There we spent the night, proceeding to Poltava next day.

Wearied by the journey of many stops and long delays, we were glad to seek our comfortable beds at the Grand Hôtel de l'Europe. In the morning, Phil was sufficiently energetic to get up in time to see the buildings of the University of Kharkov and to walk about the commercial metropolis of Little Russia.

Low scrubby trees lined the railway track. "They must be oaks," ventured Phil, when we had adjusted our luggage overhead and found seats in a compartment for the eighty or ninety miles to Poltava.

"They can't be," I disagreed. "They are not in the least like the oaks we know."

"But the leaf looks the same, and I believe they are oaks — unimposing Russian oaks." Opposite us sat a young woman reading a book. She caught something of our mild discussion and glanced up interestedly.

"Do you speak English?" I asked on the impulse.

"I understand a little," she replied pleasantly, "but I cannot speak much."

"You know French, then?"

"Yes, but more German." As that also described Phil's linguistic attainments, he referred to her, in the latter tongue, the question of the trees. As usual, he was right. They were oaks."

"Do you live in Poltava?" we asked.

"I live in Poltava, but I am studying medicine at Kharkov."

"Ah, at the University."

"Yes. You have been long in Kharkov?"

"Only over night. We are going to Poltava and then into the country."

"You would have found Poltava more entertaining in June, when the two-hundredth anniversary of Peter the Great's victory over Charles XII of Sweden was celebrated."

"We read of it in London. The Tsar was here?"

"The Tsar, and crowds of soldiers and attendants."

"You saw him of course?"

"I? No — I did not see him. I had the misfortune to be in prison."

Phil looked embarrassed. "I beg pardon, I am sure. I did not mean to be curious."

"It is nothing. Many of us were in prison, because

of the presence of the Most High in Poltava. Others were ordered to leave the city until the celebration was over."

"Would you mind describing your experience?" We were alone in the compartment and the sliding door was shut.

"Oh, no, if it would interest you." She smiled and laid down her book.

"It would interest us intensely."

"I must go back a little for you to understand all."

"We should like to hear everything."

"Well, then — I am, as I have said, a student of medicine at Kharkov. I have a sister who studies the violin at Moscow Conservatory. We are Jews. My father has a store in Poltava. He had a friend who was a doctor. He is now dead, happily for him. Since we first went to school, we had for a playmate the son of the doctor. Very young, he began to speak pieces in school, always with more fire than any of the other boys. As a youth, he surprised us by his eloquence. Everyone said: 'He will be a great lawyer. You will see!' When he went away to Moscow University we heard there was no one there to equal him in oratory, and few who could write so well, either. You know, perhaps, that our Government forbids meetings — gatherings for discussion of any kind. It is an offence to make a speech to a street crowd. But this friend of ours — he was only nineteen — he was foolhardy. One night he addressed a great crowd of the Moscow strikers. He was, of course, arrested. When they searched him, a letter was found from my sister. Before the word of his arrest reached

Poltava, the gendarmes came to make a domiciliary search — to hunt through drawers and closets and under carpets in our house.”

“For what?”

“For something which should give them an excuse to arrest my sister and me, because we were friends of the young orator in Moscow.”

“Did they find anything?”

“No, there was nothing to find. We do not love the Government, but we have never opposed it in words or in writing. The police came often after that. They would knock on the door, usually about two o’clock in the morning. My old father would go down with a lamp. Perhaps fifteen policemen would come in and tramp through the house.”

“Fifteen?”

“Sometimes more, sometimes less. Well, that is nothing. Everyone is used to that. . . . They brought our friend back to Poltava gaol where he was kept many weeks waiting for a trial. There is a rule that no one may visit a prisoner except his own family. The boy’s father was dead. His mother was — he would not see his mother.”

“Would not see his mother?”

“I — cannot explain. Her son loathed her. She was worse than dead.”

“Oh!”

“As he would not let her come to see him, there was no one to go. My sister and he, I suppose they had always cared for each other. But they were both so young. They had not thought yet to marry. When she found her school-friend without anyone to go to see

him, she did something perhaps you couldn't understand. She is a girl, gifted and sweet . . . a pure, good girl. No one could say otherwise. But she went to the prison and she put herself on record as the boy's 'civil wife'—his mistress. That was so she could see him and take him a little comfort. Russian women are like that. They care less for what people say than to be loyal to the man they love. Ivan would not have married her if he could, for he guessed all along what the end was to be for him. A Russian trial—what a farce! In two months he was sentenced to Siberia. We gave him all the money we could, my father, too. One day I was down town shopping, when he went by with his guards, 'Good-bye, Ivan,' I said from the sidewalk. He tried to raise his hand to his cap, but the chain was too heavy. He just said, 'Good-bye, Ela,' and smiled with such a brave look in his eyes."

"And your sister?"

"Oh, she didn't know when he was to be taken. I had to tell her when I got home. Well, we didn't hear from him for a long time. He was on his way to Siberia. One day a letter came to me at the University. I suppose he thought it was safer to send it to me there because—" A guard slid back the door and looked in inquisitively.

"And how large is Poltava?" asked Philip.

And the young Jewess answered ingenuously, "There are about seventy thousand people, I think." The door was slammed to.

"Go on," said Philip. "Tell us the part about your arrest."

"Well, when they began to plan for the great anni-

versary, the police were very busy picking out this one and that to send out of the city. Before the Tsar came, hundreds left. They had to go at least fifteen miles from Poltava and stay until the Emperor went. Two of my friends went away and spent the time visiting relatives, so they didn't mind it much. Of course they were sorry to miss the celebration. I thought I might be sent, but I wasn't. My sister had not yet come home from the Conservatory.

"About a week before the twenty-seventh of June (new style), a friend of mine asked me to spend the night with her, as her father and mother were telegraphed for to attend an uncle's funeral in Kiev. We went to bed, alone in the house except for an old woman-servant. At one o'clock a light shining in our faces woke us up. The servant was holding a lamp for some gendarmes to search our room. After they went out, we heard them clattering about the house, but Marfa, my friend, said, 'Go to sleep. I burned those papers we spoke about. They will go soon.' So we went to sleep. But in an hour we woke up. Someone was knocking loudly. 'It must be the police back again.'

"'Probably,' said Marfa. The old woman came in again with the men. I said, 'What do you want? Haven't you done hunting here?'

"The sergeant of the gendarmes stood in the centre of the room with a lantern in his hand and a half-dozen policemen at his back.

"'We have just been to your house,' he told me, 'but we found nothing.'

"'I could have saved you the trouble if you had asked me when you were here. I knew there was nothing.'



MUSEUM, SEVASTOPOL



“‘Just the same,’ he answered, ‘I have come back to arrest you.’

“‘I sat up in bed. ‘But you said you found nothing.’

“‘I know it, but, nevertheless, I am ordered to serve you with this warrant.’

“‘Let me see it.’ He handed me the paper. My name was there, but the charge wasn’t specified. Just — ‘for the good of the Empire’ was filled in the blank.

“‘Will you get up and dress?’ the sergeant asked me. I said I would if he would go out with his men. He sent the men out and sat down himself by the window. Of course, I didn’t like it dressing there before that policeman, but I managed it somehow. Marfa was there in bed, and the old woman. When I was dressed, I asked him to let me go home first so I could see my father and get some more clothes. I said good-bye to Marfa, and started, under guard, to walk to our house. It was a little after two, and bright moonlight. My poor old father came to the door and found me on the steps with the gendarmes. He began to moan and wring his hands, but I told him it would be alright — that I would be out again as soon as the Tsar had come and gone. They allowed me to take a drosky to the gaol. I paid the isvostchik and went in with a policeman holding me by the arm. I was put in a cell with some women who were drunk, and with some who had been taken off the streets — evil women. When the door was opened — the odour — I can’t describe it. There were no windows and when the door was shut again, one could scarcely breathe. Not long afterwards Marfa came. They had taken her, too. Then they pushed in a poor working-girl who was hysterical. She began to shriek — awful shrieks. From three o’clock

in the morning until nine that night, eight of us women suffocated in the pitch-black cell. We had no water and no food. They had forgotten us! We were shut in like cattle in a cattle-shed, and all the time the hysterical girl kept up her screaming. In the hospitals, I have heard my share of horrible noises, but I thought I could not stand it. Marfa was fainting in my arms. She is a delicate girl. Her father is a lawyer, and he is always sending her off to the Crimea for her health. One of the drunken women began to sing, and one of the others to curse. Towards night, the working-girl dropped in a fit. I had no water. I could do little for her. When a guard finally unlocked the door and let us go out a moment, I demanded the prison doctor for the girl, still lying on the floor. The doctor came, and gave her a shove with his foot, and said she'd be alright soon. Then they put her with Marfa and me in a smaller cell by ourselves. They gave us nothing to eat. Mattresses were thrown on the floor, but they were so alive with vermin that we couldn't lie down on them. We spent the night trying to rest on a bench about a quarter of an arshin (seven inches) wide. Thirty hours after we entered the gaol we were brought our first meal—breakfast. It was too vile to eat, but we were fainting for food, so we consumed a few crumbs of bread.

“Once after that we were taken into the yard for exercise. The square was so crowded we could scarcely take a step. Still, we were grateful for the air. Before we had been out ten minutes, our companion, the factory girl, fell to shrieking again, so we were all three hurried back into our cell. At the end of the sixth day, when the Most High had gone, they let us out, and we

girls who had been locked up 'for the good of the Empire' were allowed to go home. My father was in bed, ill from worrying about me."

We stared at the young woman — refined, slender, neatly clothed, with an unusually intelligent face.

"If we should tell that story in America, they would not believe it."

"Our friends would call it 'one of those morbid Russian tales,' and set it down as fiction," supplemented my husband.

"I could tell you many worse than that. At least we were not attacked by the gendarmes. . . ."

"You spoke of a letter from the boy in Siberia."

"Yes, I have his last one with me, written my sister after he had reached the village in which he must stay — no one knows how long." She ran through the leaves of her book and found some finely-written pages of thin paper. "This work on psychology is by an American, William James."

"Professor William James?"

She glanced over the title-page. "William James, Professor of Psychology, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts. . . . It is used as a text-book in most Russian Universities. This is the letter," she continued, "but I shouldn't dare read it with the possibility of officials coming any moment to that door. Since the railways belong to the Government, the employés are in the Government service."

"Oh, but a letter actually written in Siberia by the hand of an exile! What would I give to hear it!"

"Is there no way we can manage it? Though of course we shouldn't want to expose you to —"

"We are slowing down for a stop," she replied, speaking rapidly. "If you, Monsieur, could stand by the open door while the trainmen are on the station platform, I could perhaps hold it in the book and translate it quickly."

When the engine stopped, Phil slid back the door, and posed languidly, facing the corridor. Our companion moved to a seat in the corner nearest him, and farthest from the window, while I crossed to sit beside her. My note-book and pencil were conveniently at hand and I took down the letter almost verbatim. Lest this book should fall into the hands of the Russian censor, I have garbled the name of the village from which the letter was dated. With this exception the following is true, word for word:

VILLAGE OF CHUGAY-ON-THE-ANGARA.

Evening — June eighth, 1909.

My Precious —

Your letter came to me by the hand of the soldiers who brought in the last lot of prisoners. If you could imagine what it means to know that you have not quite forgotten me, you would at once sit down and write a letter of giant proportions. . . . One meets exiles who have lived here two or three years, and one marvels at the level to which it is possible for a human being to sink. We, the newcomers, are still free from the influences of the surroundings. We are hopeful. The experienced ones laugh at us; some commiserate us. . . . Who will win? We shall see.

We want to start a library. Whether we shall succeed, we do not know. Some declare that if there were books, there would be no one to read them. And it is true, the worry about the daily bread drags down the most of us to a very low depth. Work, work, hard work, work not unlike the work of the criminals in the mines, takes up the time.

With some co-operation, with a common effort, there is a possibility of utilising opportunities to earn a livelihood, opportunities overlooked by the local residents, thanks to their laziness. It would be

possible, I say, to earn one's daily bread and still avoid the need of mis-spending one's energy; but such are the environments that the exiles come to live just like the natives, and one wonders what becomes of the intelligence, initiative, and ability of a cultured person. True, some find their way out of this darkness, but they usually go to the other extreme and become merchants, or to name them more correctly, usurers. Those who boast of an outside income live comparatively well. Some maintain the outward appearance of loyalty to the Revolution, but the semblance is, metaphorically, covered with a grey dust and lacks the living life of active interest.

Of course there are some extraordinary circumstances. One lives here among barbarians. Existence as understood by the local peasants consists in heavy drinking of vodka, and the spread of unspeakable diseases.

Prices are enormous, for the towns and cities are in the far distances, and demand justifies the dealers in putting exorbitant prices on their goods. One never knows what he will have to pay. In selling to one another the peasants ask lower prices than when dealing with the exiles.

An interesting index of their intelligence is furnished by the experiences of my friend who was last year in the University, and who takes the place of the local physician now on leave of absence.

"Let me have some quinine," pleads a muzhik mother with him.

"What is the matter with you?"

"Well, my little boy has a dreadful pain in his stomach. . . ."

"Then you don't want quinine."

"Didn't you give quinine to Timothy, and didn't it help him?"

"I can't give the same medicine to everybody."

"You're stingy, your honour. Alright—as you like," and she leaves greatly displeased. If there is a medicine man in the hamlet, she goes to him. Even in the villages which boast a doctor and a drug-store, there are native women who claim to cure all through the mystic power of certain intonations. They have a large practice.

The peasants are interested in newspapers. One hears often, "When you are through reading those papers, give them to me. They'll do to cover the walls." I visited a peasant's hut recently, and looking at me from the walls were the head-lines of every progressive Russian newspaper.

June ninth.

I found a room with a married comrade. The place will cost us very little—a ruble a month for each of us. Others have to pay three or four rubles, but we have very little money. Our common treasury contains at this moment but three rubles. (One dollar and a half!)

One needs at least eight rubles a month to live on, but if necessary, I will try to live on five. The Government, you know, allows us three with which to buy food, lodging and clothes.

Fresh meat is unknown here, so we eat salt pork or smoked deer meat. The odour is frightful. We have one square meal a day—dinner. About half a pound of meat and a plate of soup is the usual portion. For supper we have sour milk. So far we have plenty of tea, and the comrades I live with have still enough sugar. But it will run short soon, and then no more of this luxury.

If we only had books, everything would be so much easier. How I should like a copy of Karl Marx' "Capital," or Taine's "Origin of Contemporary France" !

("Here," said the translator, looking up, "a paragraph is torn out. My sister considered it dangerous to keep the letter in her possession otherwise. As it is, we are running more or less of a risk. When I read it to my father I shall burn it.")

The comrade who is now the local physician examined my heart and finds an organic defect. He advises me not to chop wood and drag logs. But what can I do? That is the only occupation open to me here. . . .

I am ready to suffer even more only that the chain holding me to the Revolutionary party remains unbroken. Out of this movement, I cannot live.

The station gong sounded and the engine shrieked. The trainmen came aboard with the passengers who had been walking up and down the platform. Up to the last moment, the young woman beside me continued to translate the phrases written by the exile. Occasionally we

asked her to repeat a sentence, and she would put it into French or into hesitating English.

Once a man came along the corridor. At a signal from Phil in the doorway, the book was quickly closed. I rose to look out of the window. . . . The man passed, and the reading went on.

When the conductor came again for our tickets, Phil was playing with Happy, who had been sleeping in the folds of a rug. Our companion was once more engrossed in her reading. I was dozing in the corner.

Four hours' travel had brought us the distance which separates New York from Philadelphia. We drew into the station at Poltava.

"We had best not go out together," advised our co-traveller. "I am sorry. I should like to have shown you the city." We shook hands.

"Can't I help you with your bag?" Phil lifted it down from the rack.

"No, thank you. Here is the porter. I shall be all right. Good-bye."

She gave instructions to the dvornik and turned to follow him. But I detained her with my hand on her arm, to ask a question which had been hovering on my lips ever since she had told us her story.

"Why do you stay in Russia?" I said quickly. "You have your education, and youth. Why don't you go to England or America?"

She listened earnestly. It seemed a new thought to her. But she shook her head. "No," she replied. "My father is here, and my little sister. What I have studied is in Russian. I am learning to be a Russian

doctor. I should be little use anywhere else. No, Russia is my home. I must stay in Russia. . . . ”

“ Well, good-bye.”

“ Good-bye, again. Good-bye to you, sir,” she repeated, as she met Phil in the corridor. “ Did you find a drosky and porters? If you wish a hotel — well, there isn’t a really first-class one in the city; still, you may find the ‘ St. Petersburg ’ alright. Good-bye.”

“ Thank you. Good-bye.”

“ Good-bye.”

Poltava, at the heart of Little Russia, lies on a hill and overlooks the Vorskla river, which a little way further south helps to swell the Dnieper’s flood. A rampart encloses the city. There is a white monastery and a colony of cupola-crowned churches. In the centre of a square is an obelisk commemorative of Peter the Great, to whom there are almost as many monuments in Russia as there are in Germany to William I. Another memorial has been raised on the site of the house where he rested after the crucial battle.

At the three annual fairs a big trade is done in wool, grain, and cattle. The chief one, the Ilyinskaia, is held every year between the twenty-third of July and the twenty-third of August. It had closed about a week before our arrival. Four miles from the town the Russians fought and conquered the Swedes, June twenty-seventh, 1709. In the centre of the battle-ground is the grave of nine thousand Swedes — a mound of earth forty feet high.

Charles XII lost his reason because of his defeat, and Sweden has never since posed as a military power. On



YALTA

the other hand the victory assured to Peter I the success of his westernising ambitions, and secured Russia's position in the north.

Arminsk lay on a new line leading from Poltava to Eka-
terinoslav. Three years ago, transportation was by post-
road only. When we had bought the tickets we tried
to dispel our nervousness by walking quickly up and down
until the train was made up. We found seats in a car
not unlike an American day-coach in arrangement.
There was an aisle with double seats on one side and
single ones on the other. They were placed back to back
like the centre seats of a New York elevated train, and
were covered with red and white ticking.

The conductor, in his smart black and magenta, came
from the voksal buffet wiping his lips. The bell and
whistle signals for which our impatient ears had been
waiting, were given at last. There came the catapultic
jerk which marks the starting of a Russian engine. The
wheels moved; the guard entrained. Arminsk was forty
miles away. We should be at the door of Román's house
in three hours!



Chapter XV

THE WIDOW KIRSANOV'S LODGERS

*C*ARTS and waggons sank to their hubs in dust about the new brick station. "Arminsk?" inquired Philip of a Little Russian in an embroidered shirt. We found ourselves on the platform surrounded by impedimenta. There was no town in sight. "Arminsk?" "Da, da," assented the black-eyed villager. We searched the foreground for a housetop. He smiled broadly and signed to a church cupola at least three miles away. "Arminsk," he explained succinctly. We gazed in consternation. Then a farmer beckoned towards the hay-strewn bottom of his waggon. "Well, come on," urged my optimistic half, "if the village won't come to the railway, we'll have to go to the village." He took a bag in one hand and a roll of rugs in the other. Our informant accommodately hoisted a box to his shoulder. Happy and I trailed behind with a suit-case. Our trunks had been sent by express direct from Moscow to Sevastopol. Philip, practised by now in the art of bargaining, arranged for our conveyance to the distant sélo for fifty kopeks apiece. Exhorted to "hop along, my pigeon," the farm-horse galloped by fields of sunflowers, their faces turned always to the east.

The dust veiled us in a yellow cloud, and, as Phil stammered, the jouncing was enough to unhinge one's joints. "Sit on the rugs," he admonished. "You'll fall to pieces if you don't."

"Oh, dear, I hope these bottles won't break and come dripping through!" I was almost inarticulate from the choking dust. Phil turned up the suit-case and sat on its battered end. Then he balanced the box of dainties on his knees. Thus perched upon our baggage, we entered the straight village street. Houses and shops had been set down in hit or miss fashion. There was a cobbled square and a rambling inn. The door of the *traktir* framed the figure of the *kupets*, abacus in hand.

"*Stòi, stòi*," called Philip, clambering over the tail-piece, "here is the man to read our directions for us. Of course this charioteer doesn't know one character from another." The *kupets*, scenting the arrival of patrons, advanced with elaborate warmth. Philip proffered the slip of paper upon which Mlle. Liuba had written in Russian: "Be so kind as to direct us to the house of someone who can help us make a desirable selection of native embroideries. We wish to buy examples of the peasant handiwork to take to America." (She had said, as she formulated the written inquiry, "Anyone in so little a town will be sure to think of the widow Kirsanov.") The inn-keeper looked from Phil to me, sitting in the *teléga* cloaked in dust. "So these were Americans," his expression interpreted. He rushed off to call his wife to look at us. Two daughters came hastily to gaze curiously at the *Gospodin* in the oddly-cut clothes. With the exception of the veil which covered my hat and was crossed to tie under the chin, my apparel excited no especial interest because of its dusty disguise. But the lengths of chiffon set them to scrutinising and conjecturing while the father in *kaftan* and boots, and the mother in a skirt to her shoe-tops and a handkerchief over her

head, discussed the question we had propounded. I caught the name Kirsanov, and threw a glance of relief to Philip. Then I frowned at him as he began to fidget. Mademoiselle had cautioned us that there was no easier way to create suspicion in a muzhik than to hurry him. Why should one be in a hurry? It was not usual. There must be something wrong here. . . .

So we waited with apparent tranquillity in the hot southern sun until the matter had been thoroughly threshed out and it had been decided by the Council of Four that we could not do better than to advise with the woman named Kirsanov concerning the peasant needleworkers.

The kupets, flattered to have been consulted upon so weighty a matter, volunteered to show us the widow's house, and, walking beside our vehicle of torture, named from time to time the important office of a pedestrian and obligingly pointed out the various objects of interest—the church; the pope's house; the pope himself; the aptēka, designated by a sign showing rows of bottles; the stárosta, or village head; the bath-house, where each Saturday there is an orgy of steam-bathing followed by an hilarious switching of the nude bodies with goliks, or twigs. The houses were less dilapidated than those we had seen in Great Russia. Many were of brick and had tin roofs. A few were distinguished by having two stories. Before one of these, the kupets halted the cart. "Kirsanov," he said agreeably, and went to knock on the heavy wooden door.

A boy of perhaps twenty-three answered. His figure was poised with dignity as he listened to the voluble ex-

planation of the merchant. There was the latent fire of idealism in his eyes and he carried his head with the grace of the southron. He opened the door wider and stood back for us to enter. "Could this youth be Petrovsky?" we wondered as we thanked the kupets and went in, leaving the cart to wait with our luggage.

In a low-ceilinged room, clean and cosey, the widow Kirsanov welcomed us. We presented the letter we had brought from Shulov. She sat on the bench built against three sides of the room and read it through. She turned the page to see the signature. Her expression scarcely changed. When she finished, she sat a moment looking steadily at us. Then she spoke the word *návolochka*, and thereupon I unclasped a thin chain and handed it to her with Liuba's dangling locket. Her fingers trembled a little as she opened the case. The picture was Petrovsky's. She rose quickly from the bench, took us each by the hand, and saying something in a low voice, left the room with the locket.

"So far, so good," said Phil. "She is exactly as Liuba described her." He parted the curtains and looked into the street. I walked about the room. I opened the bag on my wrist as I had done, perhaps fifty times in the past forty-eight hours, to assure myself of the safety of a certain package. I crossed to look at the ikon. A tiny loaf of bread lay before it with a pencilled verse on the crust. There was a cross on the ceiling. I looked at that. I examined the procession of sprites and demons engraved on the urn of the samovar. Happy approached me with tail wagging low and a puzzled expression in her eyes. I lifted her sternly and set her on

the painted bench. My hands were cold, my cheeks on fire. A week ago, the name of Liuba Marilov meant nothing to us. To-day we were under the roof with the man she loved to help him escape from the net which held him. If the knowledge of our errand came to the ears of the uriadnik — well, that was a situation we had left to the future . . . for the present we must think with accuracy and act fast. No lines must be forgotten nor bits of business bungled in the drama about to begin. The door opened slowly and a shadow fell across the floor. In the doorway stood the man we had come to see.

The tall form steadied itself, with one thin hand clinging to the lintel and the other resting on the latch. The pallor of skin and lips, the dull eyes told us we had come none too soon. When he had closed the door he leaned against it as if too weak to hold himself upright. Philip pushed a chair towards him, but he continued to stand with his head lifted, and his gaze roaming from one to the other. From his fingers the locket hung by its twisted chain. He opened his straight lips, but they quivered so he could not speak. Clinging to the chair-back, he touched Phil's sleeve. "You have brought me this from Liuba?" He raised the pendant with shaking fingers. "You have come all the way from Shulov with a message to me in Arminsk? Why?" His voice was compelling, ill as he was.

"Because we are Mademoiselle Marilov's friends and yours. You are not well; you must not let our coming make you worse."

"I have been ill many weeks, but this — your coming from Liuba, will make me well." He smiled wanly and

'dropped into the rough chair behind him. "You won't go away again to-day? I see a man waiting with your luggage."

"We will stay perhaps several days," I answered. "Can you tell us where to find a room near by?"

"Why not here? The sudarynya has one just vacated by the apothecary. She asked me to say she would be glad to have you take that."

"Then we will have our things brought in immediately." Philip went to the door.

I put my hand within the bulging bag. "These are for you," I said, as Petrovsky rose to meet me and I placed in his open hands Liuba's letters, written each day since he had been in exile. At first he did not understand. He drew out the top one. . . . "October third, 1908 — October third — why this is the day I was brought from Moscow. How —" His slender fingers opened another. "And this bears the date October fourth — there must be —"

"Don't you see? She has written you every day with the hope that sometime just this would happen. Some are written like a diary with only a few lines for each date, but not one day has she failed to inscribe some message."

"In all these months she has not forgotten me one single day . . . you have brought me these letters from her which I can read again and again after you have gone and the black days come back. . . . " With his arms enfolding his love's letters he sat gazing before him, hardly comprehending yet all they meant to him. When Phil came in, Petrovsky was crouched in his chair, his eyes dropped and his fingers fumbling the let-

ters in his lap. He was breathing quickly and his lips were white.

"Run, dear, a glass of wine. He is exhausted with the shock of our coming."

I could hear Phil opening the box upstairs. In a moment he was back.

"Will you take this?" He held out the glass. "It is wine made at Shulov. Mademoiselle Marilov sent you several bottles of it, and other good things to make you better."

Petrovsky drank the wine and looked up gratefully, his fine face flushed and his eyes brighter. "I am better already. Just to hear you say her name makes me better."

"I can believe it. There are not many like her that we know."

"You cannot conceive my feelings to see you here." Liuba's lover rose and stood more erect. "This," he said, "is the one happy hour I have known for eleven months." He extended a hand which Phil took in a sympathetic grasp.

"With the good God's help," he affirmed, "it is the first of many happier ones to come." For a long moment the two men stood hand to hand — the Russian, tall, thin, magnetic even in his weakness — my American Philip, no less tall, broad, honest and manly.

"I don't know what you mean," Petrovsky told him, and laid his left over their clasped right hands; "but I do know that whatever you mean, I can trust you!"

Late in the night I awoke and saw a line of light under the exile's door. In the morning his eyes were heavy, but his face was tranquil and less worn.



THE WIDOW KIRSANOV AND THE BÁTUSHKA'S
DAUGHTER

"Can you believe that I did not go to sleep until I had read very nearly every word of my letters?" he asked with a smile. We were alone in the bright living-room.

"Easily. No man ever had a lovelier sweetheart. Her face is no more beautiful than her spirit, her nature. We grew to love her in a few hours. If I were a man I should adore her."

The man turned his head to look out the narrow window. "There are many who have — adored her. In these past months when I could not hear from her, I was tormented by the thought that she might have — forgotten."

"Just as she was haunted by the fear that you might think she had!"

I told him what she had said in the wood, and of our meeting and of the two days we spent with her — the Lady of Shulov.

"And yet," said Petrovsky brokenly, "I may never see her again." He paced the room, his head and shoulders drooping in a characteristic attitude.

I tried to divert him by saying, "You seem better to-day."

"Yes, I am stronger, but of what use is it? For weeks I have thought death was to bring my early release, and I have been almost glad — glad to think I should soon be free of the hampering bonds, and the torture of existence. I am useless — useless to myself and to the cause of Free Russia. The finger of the Government is on my lips. I shall not be allowed to teach even my little school this winter. The authorities are suddenly fearful that my reform ideas will leak through lessons on geography and problems in addition. I am unable to do manual labour

for a living. I should have starved this summer but for my good friends the Sudarynya and her son."

"Her son? He is the one who let us in."

"I think so. I heard his voice at the door."

"We thought he might be you."

"When I came here to live there were people who said we were brothers. I wish we were. I am very fond of him."

"And so he is of you. He told us last night how he admired you."

"He knows no English. How did you talk together?"

"He speaks German."

"Ah, yes, he has studied with the apothecary, who is a Baltic Russian. He works in the aptēka with him."

"He has an unusually interesting face."

"And a very good mind. I wish he could have advantages impossible to obtain here."

"Could he act as a courier? We think we shall need one travelling in the Crimea and elsewhere."

"An interpreter, you mean? I should think he would do excellently. He is observant, quick, willing. It would be a wonderful chance for him. Would you really think seriously of it?"

"You would miss him?"

"I should console myself thinking what it meant to him to escape for even a little while from the narrowness of this village."

"Philip," as his foot sounded on the stair, "come in a moment."

I told him what Petrovsky had said of the young man, Michael. We agreed that during the rest of our journey we might find it awkward to make our way without a

knowledge of Russian. Considering his friend's recommendation, we decided that the widow's son would suit us admirably. So we determined that Petrovsky should ask him if he would go, explaining his duties and remuneration.

When we returned in the late afternoon, the enthused face which greeted us made unnecessary his words of acceptance. We had been with the widow to inspect the drawn-work and embroidery of a family of five daughters, and had bought, too cheaply for our conscience' sake, linens wrought with eye-straining skill. Bundles and all, our hands were seized with impulsive gratitude the moment we appeared at the door of the cottage. The secretary of the village commune, the pesar, passing by, looked in at the sound of voices in the open doorway. Instantly he was hailed. When they had told him the good luck that had come to his young fellow townsman, their hands were shaken heartily with profuse nods of felicitation. A little way down the street he met a patriarch of the mir, who was stopped and made to listen to the news. Young Michael Ivanovitch (son of his father named Ivan) was going away with the Amerikánets who arrived yesterday to purchase the unequalled embroideries of the ladies of Arminsk! In the evening we escaped from the press of congratulating neighbours who thronged the living-room and drank gallons of hot tea-tinted water drawn from the happy mother's samovar.

"It will be wonderful for him, wonderful," Petrovsky repeated with glowing eyes, as the sounds of the merry-making came up to us in the bare little room where the exile rested on his couch. He stroked the puppy lying with her head on his wrist. "Forgive me if it is a pre-

sumption to ask, but when will you leave?" His face contracted with pain.

"Not until you are better."

He flashed us a look of gratitude.

"I cannot bear to think you will go quite yet. Your words have strengthened me; my soul was hungry for a message from the one I love, and for news of others involved in the cause for the sake of which I am here."

"If your mind were made well, would you be quite strong again?"

"It is only worry which makes me ill."

Phil leaned forward to touch one poor hand. "Have you thought what relief you might find in the money we brought from Liuba?"

"Yes, I have thought. I can pay back to the widow Kirsanov all I owe, and I need not worry any more about bread — for as long as I am here. So much will Liuba's rubles assure me."

"She sent them to buy you more than that." My heart jumped at Phil's words; I shut my hands tight.

"More than bread? What else could money buy me, a prisoner within these limits?"

"Release," Phil answered him slowly.

"Release — freedom for me? You are jesting."

"I am in earnest. We have come to help you — escape — from Arminsk."

Petrovsky paled at the measured words. He leaned on an elbow and stared. He drew himself to a sitting posture and continued to stare, gripping the bed-rail. "To — help — me — escape!" he whispered. "And if I should escape from this village, where should I go? To the sélo beyond to be taken by the Cossacks and dragged

back by the heels to be beaten in the square?" He bared his arms. "This is what they gave me one night when my mind seemed to have left me and I wandered in a maze to the outskirts of the town. I was picked up by the constable beyond the line. They gave me fifty strokes of the whip. Here are their marks. Do you think, possessed of my senses, I shall try it again? I escape? I?" he repeated, as he sank against the pillow, a bruised arm across his breast.

In the street, a youthful chorus was singing a song of Little Russia, while their elders in the room below still discussed over the Fountain of Cheer the all-engrossing topic of the widow Kirsanov's good fortune.

"Forgive me," begged Phil. "You are too ill. I should not have spoken now, but Liuba told us you once carried a false passport and that you escaped by that means from the Petersburg trap." Petrovsky's head was in his hands. "She dreamed of some such ruse freeing you again; but it was the possibility of our coming here which crystallised the dream into hope. She has not forgotten what you talked of the night on the terrace of the Kremlin."

The white face lifted. "Nor have I—one waking moment. But, my friends, if I should attempt to leave this village, I should be taken again in an hour. I have no passport, not even a forged one. And if I had, what would it avail me in this hamlet where I am known from *pristav* to smallest child and where strangers come so seldom their every move is inquired into. When Michael went to the police last night with your passport he was stormed with questions. It is scarcely safe for you to be here now talking with me. If it were known that you

had come purposely to see me — I do not like to think what might happen.”

“Nothing can happen. Our motive in coming to Arm-insk was announced when we asked the trader for directions. Your name has not been mentioned. We will not be seen with you. Do not fear. We shall be discreet.”

I sat thinking of Liuba. Every moment we talked here she was waiting for the word which would tell her, her hopes had been realised. Pinned inside my blouse was the code she had arranged. She had confided to us money to effect her lover’s escape and to pay his way across the frontier where he should await her. But with us and with him remained the grim responsibility of finding the way out.

“Think no more about it — I beg you,” Petrovsky besought us as he put a hand on Phil’s shoulder. “I am a prisoner of the Government. If you were taken for conniving at my escape, the influence of your Ambassador and the State Department would amount to little. Your punishment would be as severe as that of a Russian sympathiser in the same position.”

“But Liuba,” I said, “how are we going to tell her? Her arrangements are complete by now to leave on the moment of receiving the favourable despatch which she believes will come. Think of her agonising disappointment!”

“I cannot let myself think of it,” he answered sternly. “It is the inevitable.”

We slept little during the night. Across the entry, we could hear the widow’s lodger turning restlessly upon his creaking bed.

I dreamed of the girl waiting at Shulov. I saw her

face as she opened an envelope and crushed it to her lips with a gesture of ecstasy. But when I awoke, there was our simple room and my husband standing over me, fully dressed. "What is it?" I asked.

"Nothing. I could not sleep."

"Is it late?"

"Only about six. I am going to send some word to Liuba. We must at least let her know Román is alive and that we are with him."

I took an envelope from under my pillow. "Then send her this: 'Advise us as to number of table-scarfs desired.' That means—'Reached Arminsk. Are with Román. No developments yet.' You have the Moscow address she gave us?"

"Yes—Volkonsky, Presnik Peroulók 7. Michael will drive me to the telegraph office. He has gone for a waggon."

"Have you had tea?"

"Yes, downstairs. Good-bye, dear."

"Good-bye." I heard the heavy cart rumble away. For a long time I lay thinking despondently of our shattered hopes. If Petrovsky could only use our passport and return it to us after he was safely across the border—but I knew that was impracticable. In the first place, our passport was issued at Washington to an American citizen and his wife. And even if he could, with his excellent knowledge of English, impersonate an American, the document would bear incriminating dates and stamps when he returned it to us which would be remarked when we ourselves presented it later. Likewise, it would be futile for us to buy him a counterfeit passport from a border Jew, since, even if he could receive it undetected,

the business of a stranger leaving the village would, as he said, be inquired into too closely to make plausible escape by that means. A Russian passport is police permission to live, to move, to have one's being. Without it, one is criminal in the eyes of the law. The more I cogitated the problem, the more I realised the apparent hopelessness of solving it. Petrovsky knew better than we. Broken and unmanned, he might some day be released by the gaoler. Until then, he must remain a prisoner — unless Death freed him first!

I had engaged to take one or two embroidery lessons to excuse our lingering in the village. Neither of us was ready yet to face the pain of bidding good-bye to the sick man whose tragic cause so engrossed us.

I was off to my lesson before the cart came back from the station. The priest's daughter opened the door — a rather comely girl, with a red and white kerchief knotted at her neck and another over her head. The póp was stretched on the wall-bench in a drunken sleep, while the wife tended her melon-patch at the side of the white-washed cottage. Silently, for neither knew the language of the other, the young girl and I sat down to our lesson. The scarf in her hand was embroidered and buttonholed in green, tan, and yellow. It was perhaps three yards long and there was not a square inch of unworked linen. Even the edging, pointed like crocheted lace, was a mass of buttonholing. Let into the body were squares of contrasting lace picked out in white and yellow. I had bought one similar to it the previous day for nine dollars. For more than an hour I sat beside my teacher, as I bent with heavy heart over a strip of hand-woven linen and a needleful of orange thread. The day was

hot and the doors stood open. The mother, coming in from the garden, stopped to wash her hands at the spout of the water-kettle hanging on the tiny porch. She wiped them on her skirt and went to fetch chunks of wood, which she thrust into the tiled stove and lighted. In a moment there was a leaping fire within the bricked oven. When the wood was burned to red embers, she stopped the chimney and shut the stove-door, first setting next to the coals some tins of bread and a pot of soup. The stove, reaching almost to the ceiling and filling a fourth of the room, began to grow hot. By the time my lesson was over I was glad to flee to the scorched street, so well had this particular stove sustained the reputation of the Russian heating system.

I rounded the corner of the commune hall. Michael was coming down the steps. We walked along together. "I have just been to apply for my passport and to pay the fee of seventeen rubles which permits me to cross the frontier and to stay six months."

"And if you should stay a year?"

"Oh, then I should have to pay another fifteen rubles." He glanced at the work-bag on my wrist.

"And I have been to take a lesson in needle-work," I explained. "The priest's daughter is my teacher."

"Did you see the bátushka?"

"Yes, but he didn't see me." I laughed.

Michael laughed, too. "He was drunk, I suppose."

"Very."

"He usually is, our bátushka."

"I believe that is a failing of Orthodox priests. This pope's family seems very poor."

"But they should be prosperous in comparison with

their parishioners. They have the church land to cultivate besides his salary of three hundred rubles a year."

"And his fees?"

"Yes, fees for marrying, and for driving away cattle plagues and droughts. Funeral fees, too, and lots of others — he is called to anoint the sick, to bless the seed-sowing, the harvests, and the fruit before it is gathered. This priest of ours, he is a 'merchant pope.' He will not marry, bury, or bless until he is promised as much as he demands. A friend of mine who wanted to be married had to wait for months until he earned fifty rubles to pay the priest. He makes money, too, selling false certificates of communion."

"What are they?"

"Certificates that a man has taken communion at least once a year. He must be able to prove it to the police under certain circumstances. Oh, our priest makes enough. His wife is lucky — 'happy as a priest's wife,' we say."

"Roman Catholic priests are forbidden to marry."

"With us a priest must have a wife before he can have a cure. If his wife dies, he has to leave the church or enter a monastery."

He touched his cap to a young woman who came out of the apothecary shop. "She is the feldscher, the physician's assistant. In our village we have one vratch, or head physician. When he is busy or tired, he sends his feldscher. This one is a very nice feldscher. I see her often in the aptēka, where I work." Michael's conscious manner told me he thought her a very nice feldscher, indeed. She entered an izbá just ahead of us where we heard the crying of a very little baby. As we came



DARLINGS OF THE TSAR



abreast of the door, we saw her standing just within it, and heard her arguing with the young mother who held a wee form swaddled in red. Michael stopped and called out something to them. As the mother turned to reply the doctor seized the baby and resisted the efforts of the mother to take it again. We walked on.

"Why are they quarrelling over the baby?"

"It is sick. The mother wants to wash it over the cross painted on the threshold, but the feldscher will not let her."

"I should think not."

"It seems a foolish practice, but there are many who believe it drives out the evil spirit."

"Do you believe it?"

"It might help. I knew a family once who neglected to sprinkle the foundation of their izbá with the blood of an animal. Within a year after the house was finished, the father was sent away for arson, their horse died, and the grandmother went blind."

"And if they had remembered to sprinkle the blood?"

"And had put the animal's head under the ikon corner, probably none of those things would have happened."

A wretched old man leaned from the window of a tumbled-down hut. Michael spoke to him, and the poor creature answered him with a smile, in the midst of his rags. His face was gentle, and his voice so patient. One day I found a poem by the Russian, Nikitin, which describes him:

Old Gaffer, with white beard and smooth
bald head,
Sits in his chair.
His little mug of water and his bread,
Stand near him there.

Honeymooning in Russia

Grey as a badger he: his brow is lined;
His features worn.
He's left a world of cark and care behind
Since he was born.

The old man still plaits shoes, with
fingers slow,
From bark of birch;
His wants are few, his greatest joy to go
Into God's church.

He stands within the porch, against
the wall,
Mutt'ring his prayers.
A loyal child, he thanks the Lord for all
Life's griefs and cares.

Cheery he lives — with one foot in
the grave —
In his dark hole.
Whence does he draw the strength that
keeps him brave,
Poor peasant soul?

Philip was helping the widow shell beans at the side doorstep, with Happy and an infantile kitten rolling amiably at his feet.

"There was no trouble about the telegram?" He shook his head gloomily. I sat down beside him and took up a handful of the plump pods. "I'll help you, good boy. Did you know we were going this afternoon to the Cossack camp?"

"With whom?"

"With Michael, our courier. I like him so much. I am glad he is going away with us."

"So am I. I wish someone else was too."

"Don't! I can't get Liuba out of my mind."

"And I can't forget the poor fellow's face last night — and his bruises."

"Have you seen him this morning?"

"Yes. He was awake all night."

"When the beans are shelled let's go upstairs to see him."

He came to the door with a letter in his hand. I smiled significantly, and he touched the written page. "It is the one which comforts me most. She says — but I will read you one part. Won't you sit here, Madame? There are cigarettes on the table, Mr. Houghton." He scanned a sheet filled with Liuba's writing. "This is it — 'In the organisation, we remember our exiled comrades as though they were with us yesterday. You suffer, you are lonely — but do not forget that what you have taught us we are practising, that your martyrdom is our inspiration here in Moscow.' When I read that I feel perhaps my life-work is not utterly annulled."

To our mystification, he went to a corner of the room, and stooping, lifted out a piece of boarding with the aid of a knife-blade. A space between the inner wall and the bricks was half-filled with letters and personal effects. "This is my safe," he said over his shoulder. "My room has been searched twice, but the uriadnik's eyes were not quite sharp enough to see this slit in the wood. I could not have had better luck if I had bribed him."

"The uriadnik — he is the town constable?"

"The town thief also. Theoretically, he receives eighteen rubles a month. Actually, he is able to live in peasant luxury on his bribes. Still one can't judge him too severely. He is at the bottom of the ladder. On every rung sits a dishonest official."

“Does that apply to the army also?”

“Police officers are bribed. Army officers steal. I know a colonel in a Siberian regiment who receives from the Government a four-thousand-ruble salary, and who steals forty thousand a year out of the amount allotted him to buy supplies for his men.” Petrovsky fitted the board into place, and stretched his lithe length on the couch.

“What are the private soldiers paid?”

“Oh, less than a ruble a month — twenty-five cents in your money.”

“And our men get more than fifty times that amount!”

“Two-thirds of the nation’s entire revenue is absorbed in the maintenance of the army and navy, and yet our common soldiers are the worst paid in Europe. The peasants are taxed so heavily that half their earnings go for State and communal assessments. There is the enormous revenue obtained by the Government from the sale of vodka. According to official statistics, and they are usually understated for dishonest reasons, the sale of stamps and the income from the mines and crown domains bring the revenue to not less than 570,000,000 rubles a year. A fifth of the annual budget is stolen — at least a fifth. It is the national disgrace that our officials from humble gendarme to bureaucratic head are amenable to the touch of gold in the palm. There is now pending an investigation of a shortage of 2,000,000 rubles last year in the quartermaster’s department of the army.”

“An investigation? Someone disgruntled with his share must have informed,” Phil laughed as he lit a cigarette. “You say the peasants are taxed half their in-

come, and yet they earn an average of only a hundred dollars a year? How can they live?"

"By wearing their sheepskin coats until they fall from their backs; by mixing roots and tree-bark with their flour; by stuffing every crack through which the winter cold could come, and living, sometimes two or three families together to save heat, in one room fifteen feet square, and at night, sleeping on the stove, on shelves built near the ceiling, or on the dirt floor with the farm animals, if they are so fortunate as to have saved them from the tax collector. If through drought or famine, the muzhik cannot pay the collector, his last horse or cow is taken, and if his outbuildings are already empty, he is beaten in the square, receiving as many lashes as the stárosta dictates. The majority of our farmers, who form eighty-five per cent. of the entire population of 160,000,000, never have enough to eat, owing to ignorance of the first principles of farming, and entire disregard of their interests by the greedy Government. Russia eats a third as much as Germany pro rata. Unless he owns his land, the peasant has no vote in national affairs, and there are few enough able to buy the lands only just opened to them. The Tsar, who is called by some a mild man, more kindly than cruelly disposed, is very fond of dictating messages to his 'children,' indicating his solicitude for their welfare.

"He has a personal income so stupendous that no one can estimate it. The amount is never publicly announced in the State budget, of course. But he owns millions of square miles of forest lands, and Siberian mines which yield precious stones and metals. Much of his money he banks abroad. During a recent visit to Sweden, he

spent in one morning 200,000 rubles for antiques and objects d'art. He loves his dear starving peasants, he poses as their 'little father.' What does he do for them personally, with the preposterously huge income at his own command? Does he buy them modern ploughs so that their pitiful acreage may be properly cultivated? Does he send trained agriculturists among the peasants to show them how to fertilise and care for their land? There are provinces in Russia where the farmers never have enough to eat, who by springtime, are invariably reduced to actual starvation as terrible as the famines of India which arouse the nations perhaps once in a decade. With their primitive implements they *cannot* cultivate the land so it will produce enough to feed them. Their ploughs do not make furrows deep enough to cover the seeds. When the rains come, half the seed rots. Or if the weather is dry, the seed blows away or is carried off by the birds. Russia is a nation of agriculturists—who know nothing about farming. The soil is fallow exceeding that of any soil elsewhere known. The acreage is two and a half times that of the United States. The summers are hot, and the grain which is grown, is of the highest grade. With instruction, and with a little aid in securing the most ordinary modern implements, the muzhik could produce bumper crops, but under the 'paternal' administration of the Government, the Russian farmer is the most abjectly wretched creature depending on the soil for his existence."

"But would the muzhik improve such advantages if they were offered him?"

"Ah," sighed Petrovsky, "we know well the faults of the muzhik. He is not deserving of all sympathy. He

is slothful; he has no initiative; he is dishonest; he is too easily satisfied, perhaps. A loaf of bread and a bottle of vodka are too apt to be his measure of happiness. Above all, he is a Slav of the purest type. Lethargic, kind, generous, lacking in moral restraint and in perseverance, improvident — but never small in his nature — that is our peasant."

"Not very encouraging material!"

"No, but what shall we expect of a creature primitive in his passions, handicapped by racial slothfulness, and kept in darkness almost as dense as that of the early ages when Russia was first settled by the Slavi, a Pagan, unmoral race. He has slaved to pour untold wealth into the laps of the reigning families and their dissolute followers, without reward. Do you think oppression can breed manliness and moral vigour? Over three hundred years ago Russ emperors formed a corner on commodities to extort bread-money from the commoner. As far back as that they invented ingenious schemes to fraudulently increase their incomes. Ivan Vasilovitch, a Tsar of the sixteenth century, retorted, when chided as to his practices: 'My people are like my beard, the oftener shaven the thicker will it grow.' Since his time there has been scarcely a single ruler whose attitude toward his subjects has not been the same. An English envoy said, of conditions in 1588: 'The fault is rather in the practise of their nobility that engrosse it than in the countrie itself.'

"Those words are just as true under the rule of Nicholas II as they were under Ivan the Terrible in the barbaric years of the sixteenth century. We have no nation — merely a bureaucracy which, through love of power,

and still more through love of money, strangles, squeezes, tortures a people too ignorant, as yet, to assert themselves."

"Has there been nothing at all to better the people through all these centuries?"

"There has been a slight advance in educational facilities, as the result of the demands of a partially awakened race. About 4,000,000 children are now enrolled in Russian schools. Their parents never had a book in their hands. This new craving for education is the best augury for the future. In these days, only ignorance tolerates absolute monarchy. 'Intelligence is the enemy of tyranny.' When the Russian muzhik can read, he will shake off his chains."

"What percentage of the peasant class is illiterate?" I asked.

"About ninety per cent. can neither read nor write. Worse than that, twenty-eight per cent. of the Orthodox priests who essay to lead the people scholastically, as well as spiritually, are unable to decipher the books from which they pretend to teach. Nine-tenths of Russia's 160,000,000 are on the verge of barbarity. Though a true son of my country, I have to confess it."

"What has your party done to help Russia — practically, I mean?"

"The Revolutionary Socialist party has accomplished little beyond a feeble awakening of the peasantry. Some of our number teach in the summer and we have valued aids in the men and women who work during the winter in city factories, and return in the summer to the villages, converts to the reforms promulgated by the Progressists. My countrymen begin to understand their

wrongs. The first step has been accomplished. The Administration is more and more powerless to compel unquestioned obedience. The attitude of the peasants has changed in the past three years. They are less afraid of the soldiery, and are more indifferent to the threats of the police. But otherwise, the revolutionary movement is a failure. It has resulted in more terrible atrocities on the part of the Government. We have gone back to the days of half a generation ago. The prisons are crowded beyond their capacity. Sentences of death, torture and exile are pronounced for minor crimes, and insignificant offences. Men are arrested and sentenced without knowing with what they are charged. Russia is under military rule. The Third Section is omnipotent. Its aim is to frighten and coerce the nation into passive subservience to the wishes of the Tsar and court, to whom the condition of their pocketbooks is of more consequence than the happiness and prosperity of the kingdom, or the respect of the civilised world. The Emperor is the patron of the Black Hundred — an organisation who call themselves 'The Men of Russia.' They are the hoodlums, the roughs of the cities, who serve the police for reward. During riots, incited by themselves oftentimes, they have the right to plunder and assault undisturbed. A portion of their spoils is shared with their superiors, the Political Police and officials of the departments or bureaus. The Tsar, or those about him, are often the instigators of pogroms, in which hundreds of Jews and peasants are abused and robbed. This Tsar has an especial animosity towards the Jew and the Finn. He has personally commended his minions for persecuting these, for the most part inoffensive, people. The

Jews are commercially aggressive — the Slavs are not. The Jews have monopolised certain trades. In many parts of the 'pale' they are the merchants. If the Jew was not suppressed and oppressed he would own the nation. Therefore — riots, massacres, restrictive laws, fines, religious intolerance. The Jew is not a fighter. Left to himself, he is not a disturber of the peace. But if he sees his women attacked and maltreated under the most heinous conditions, he will resist the bestial marauders, who are often sent into a community to stir up trouble so that an excuse may be offered to kill and pillage. The Jew will endure an injury affecting his purse, his freedom, his convenience, but he will fight for the rights of his family and his church. The Russian Government allows no synagogue to be built in a community of less than eight hundred Jews, and no meeting-place in a town of less than five hundred. An educated Jew, and there are very few so fortunate as to have a university education, may go about freely in any part of the country. He may live in the cities unmolested. But the great majority of Jews are confined within the iron ring of the pale, which embraces most of the west and southwest. Even there he is hampered by laws which constantly change and which are made to harass him almost beyond endurance."

"What about the Finns?"

"The subjection of Finland is the pet project of Nicholas II. His father was the Finns' champion — he himself has urged their subordination ever since he came to the throne. The reason is a strategic one. He needs Finland's rock of Sveaborg as a naval base, since his other Baltic defences are out-of-date. To that end he instructs



VILLAS OVER-HANGING THE SHORE

his ministers and officials to reduce the Finns to a state of compulsory loyalty. The Finns are more Scandinavian than Slavic. They detest everything Russian. In character and temperament they are the antithesis of the Slav. They are stalwart, truthful, intelligent and self-respecting. Their enforced Russification by this Tsar is an outrage."

"The Revolutionists killed Bobrikov, governor of Finland."

"Yes, he was a tyrant after the ideal of our Emperor. We used to hope the nation would benefit from the removal of men like him. On the contrary, even more repressive measures are in force. Blood flows, but it is the blood of the innocent. The Revolution is conquered — we do not know for how long. The Government's military strength is too much for us. We are worse than powerless. We who are exiled suffer to little purpose."

"But the world believes Russia on the highway to regeneration because the people have been granted the right to elect a congress — a duma. What has that amounted to?"

"Almost nothing. It was a hoax perpetrated by the Tsar — a sop which he threw to subjects enraged at being forced into an unpopular and unnecessary war, a subterfuge to distract the public mind from thoughts of revolution. The war was welcomed for a similar reason . . . but instead of enlisting patriotism, it inflamed the peasantry against the Government still more. The soldiers took up arms unwillingly, mutinously. Some have confessed that they courted defeat to chagrin those who had driven them into battle. They did not know

for what they were fighting. And indeed the war was only another instance of the nation's being bled for the enrichment of a few. The Grand Duke Alexander, the ex-Viceroy Alexeiev and General Bezobrazov, or General Ugly if you translate his name into English, got Korean concessions from the Grand Duke's cousin which they cultivated for purely personal profit. Certain international entanglements which resulted brought on the war with its appalling losses." Petrovsky lay with his arms under his head, as with unstudied eloquence he touched upon one vital topic after another. When I asked him to tell us something of the organisation of the Revolutionists, he said: "Our head occupies a very important chair in one of the universities. The executive committee is composed of twelve Russian professors, teaching for the most part in German universities near the frontier.

"The head of the expatriated Revolutionists is Prince Kropatkin, as you probably know. He was once a prisoner in the Petropaulovski fortress, but escaped to Paris. There is a Central Committee and a Fighting Organisation, besides sub-committees assigned to special service. One of my closest friends was stationed not long ago in Switzerland to watch for the possible appearance there of the traitor Eugene Azev, condemned to die for his double-dealing with our party and the Political Police. Each thought him loyal to the interests they represented.

"But assassination is not the primary purpose of the Revolutionary Socialists. There is a growing feeling that Russia's salvation will eventually come, not from within, but from without. My comrades abroad now seek to inform other nations of the atrocities practised

in Russia. I believe that is the greatest work we have to do.

"Some day the world will call a halt. Until then, conditions will not be bettered. Oppression has too long been the policy of our rulers. It is in the blood. They will not enlighten the people if to do so will cost them their throne and the perquisites it entails.

"Where will you find another nation that has so abused its men of great intellect? What other nation would not have honoured, rather than exiled, Turgénev, most wonderfully endowed of all Russian novelists. His Government rewarded his gifts by imprisonment, and banishment to his estate. When he died, his friends were not permitted to eulogise him over his casket, flowers were forbidden, likewise any sort of procession to the grave. He was buried like a convict. His crime consisted in having a great mind and an appealing pen. He was a dangerous man in a kingdom where an attempt is made to shut out every ray of intellectual light. Gogol, the Russian Dickens, was also banished for a time. At the recent celebration of his centenary in Moscow when a statue was dedicated to him, he was honoured by the people, it is true. Those outside Russia honour him also, but his own Government hated him. Why? Because he was eminent, one of the most powerful portrayals of life known. Georg Brandes said: 'In the works of Gogol, Russia has outstripped the rest of Europe. It is only in Ibsen's dramas that Europe has attained to the heights of Gogol.' He was born not far from Poltava. I have a picture of his birth-cottage near Janowstina. If you would like to have it, I will give it to you."

"We should be delighted. We saw the new statue in

Moscow. It is very fine. Around the pedestal are bas reliefs illustrative of his characters."

"Yes, I have read about it. For the unveiling, a grand-stand was erected, but was found to be unsafe, so another, and still another was built. But at the moment when the people would have crowded into the seats the third one was also found to be so badly constructed that after all, everyone had to stand."

"I suppose the contractor hadn't enough money to make a good grand-stand after he had paid out the necessary bribes to the police," Phil ventured.

"You are becoming sophisticated in the ways of the Russians, Mr. Houghton." Petrovsky's eyes lighted with amusement.

"May we hear more of Russian *littérateurs*? I groan at my ignorance."

"The literature of no other European nation is so little known abroad. Perhaps it would interest you to know how Gogol died. He became, toward the end of his life, a religious fanatic. He would pray for hours at a time before a shrine. One day he was found lifeless in the street before a sacred painting. He had literally starved to death, as his ardour was so great he had forgotten even food. It is a striking fact that most of our poets and novelists have been Little Russians. For the past generation it has been forbidden them to use their own language in writing. This is done, of course, to humiliate and discourage a people of unusual natural graces, and of a totally different temper from their northern neighbours. Gogol was a son of Malo Russie, as were Puschkin and his friend, Lermontov. The latter came originally from a Scotch family named Learmont. Ban-

ished and persecuted in life, they were both killed in duels. Puschkin was led unjustly into an affair with an unprincipled Baron who died abroad in 1895. But for him, our most illustrious poet might still have been alive.

"Shevchenko, another Little Russian, was twice whipped and sent to Siberia. Korolenko, a modern singer of the south, lives in Poltava. I have seen him riding his bicycle in the streets — a tall, grey-bearded man with an almost inspired face. Alexis Tolstoi, the Walter Scott of this country, as Puschkin was the Byron, is not to be confounded with Count Leo Tolstoi, whose 'Anna Karenina' has been called the greatest of all novels. Dostoevsky's novels of prison life, written from his own experience, are Russian classics. Of the other poets, there are Kozlov, Nadson, Koltsov, Nekrassov. The latter's 'Red-Nosed Frost' is an epic."

"That's the one you know, isn't it Philip? You said a part of it that day in Vologda."

"I know a little of it. It gave me my first real notion of the Russian peasantry. I wish you would recite one or two of your especial favourites. Joyce and I would enjoy it immensely."

"Well, I like Lermontov's 'Circassian Song,' for one. That's not very long. I'll say that if it would give you pleasure. I know a good English translation, for I used to teach it to an English boy I tutored one year.

"'With fair maids our mountains teem;
In their dark eyes star-sparks gleam;
Life with them may envied be,
Sweeter still is liberty!

Never take a wife, lad,
To my words give heed;

Save your money up, lad,
To buy yourself a steed!

He who takes a wife, too late
Finds he chose a sorry fate.
No more 'gainst Russian foes he'll fight!
Why? — lest his wife should weep with fright!

Never take a wife, lad,
To my words give heed;
Save your money up, lad,
To buy yourself a steed!

He has no inconstant mood,
Bears you well through fire and flood,
Sweeps the wild steppe like the wind,
Brings far things near — leaves all behind.'

— And then the same chorus over again," said the reader, breaking off. "Hasn't it a swing as wild as the Circassian hills?"

"Circassian" reminded us of our experience in Nizhni, which we had never confided to anyone. We told Petrovsky about it, and he looked so grave we concluded we had not underestimated the danger of our position in the Oriental tea-garden on the banks of the Oka.

"One more poem," begged Phil. "Do you know 'The Wreck'?"

"Kozlov's 'Wreck'?" That is one of the poems every Russian knows."

The fire of "The Circassian Song" had swept him to his feet. Now he stood leaning slightly forward, his expressive eyes reflecting the pure sentiment of the words:

"The day in a purple flush had died,
And I, with bitter thoughts at heart,
Lulled by the murmur of the tide,
Upon the sea-shore walked apart.

There lay, bereft of mast and sail,
A shattered ship, half-sunk in sand,
That seething waves in some past gale
Had cast upon this lonely strand.

Long since, the moistening dew and showers
Had sealed with moss each starting plank,
And in the crevices grew flowers,
With knots of sea-grass, pale and rank.

Storm-driven on this rock-girt coast,
From whence and whither bound was she?
In that wild hour when she was lost
Who shared her hopeless destiny?

The silent depths, the silent waves,
The secret of their depths withhold;
Only the evening sunlight mocks
Th' abandoned hulk with gleams of gold.

The fisher's wife sits on the prow
With eyes that search the distant seas;
She waits and watches, singing low
A song which mingles with the breeze;

And close to her a little boy,
With tangled locks of flaxen hair,
Laughs aloud, and leaps the waves with joy,
His curls all ruffled by the air.

He plucks the tender blooms that grow
Where the sparse tufts of sea-grass wave.
Dear happy child, how should he know
His flowers are gathered from a grave!"

His vibrant voice fell in tender cadence. "Exquisite,"
I sighed.

"You would like 'The Mower' by Koltsov, and Nad-
son's 'Wherefore,' but I know those only in the orig-
inal. . . ."

"Give us one of Turgénev's Prose Poems," suggested Philip.

"Very well — 'The Beggar.' . . .

"I was walking in the street — a beggar stopped me — a frail old man. His inflamed, tearful eyes, blue lips, rough rags, disgusting sores . . . oh, how horribly poverty had disfigured the unhappy creature! He stretched out to me his red, swollen, filthy hand — he groaned and whimpered for alms. I felt in all my pockets — no purse, watch or handkerchief did I find. I had left them all at home. The beggar waited . . . and his outstretched hand twitched and trembled slightly. Embarrassed and confused, I seized his dirty hand and pressed it — "Don't be vexed with me, brother; I have nothing with me, brother." The beggar raised his blood-shot eyes to mine; his blue lips smiled, and he returned the pressure of my chilled fingers. "Never mind, brother," stammered he; "thank you for this — this, too, was a gift, brother." I felt that I too had received a gift from my brother.'

"Turgénev was the master of all Russians in style, but he acknowledged that he and the others were pupils of Gogol in realism.

"We are all descended from Gogol's 'Cloak,'" he said. 'The Cloak,' you know, is one of Gogol's earliest masterpieces.

"Here is a good bit of description from Nezhdanov — 'With a glass of spirit in thy hand, with thy head leaning against the north pole, with feet pressed against the Caucasus, oh, Fatherland! Thus thou sleepest, Holy Russia, deeply, and soundly, and steadily.' Depressingly

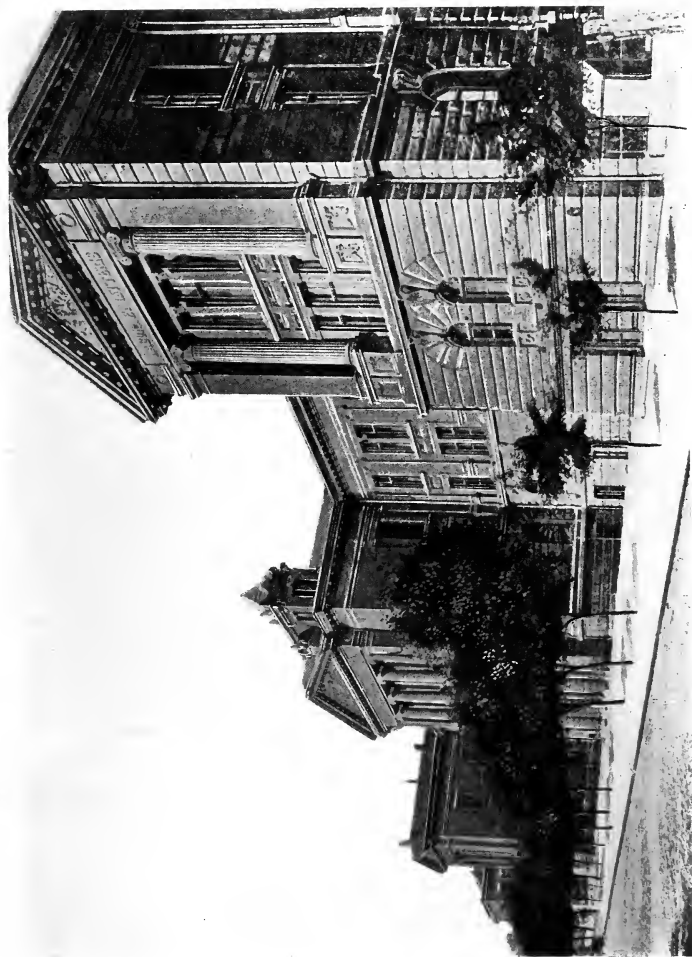
graphic, is it not? What will the world say to a nation which does nothing to arouse the sleeper—but rather seeks to keep him asleep and drunk with ignorance?”

In the afternoon, we walked to the Cossack quarters on the edge of the town. A square of earth tracked with horse-hoofs, was bounded on three sides by white barracks, at the moment deserted except for a few invalided soldiers, and an attendant who was exercising a cavalry-horse with a bandaged knee.

“The troop have assembled for manœuvres,” said Michael, as we heard the shouts of officers and the answering ring of arms. We straggled across the parade-ground, and a rush of pounding hoofs swept towards us like a thunderous hurricane. I stood confused in the path of the savage whirlwind of men and horses. Without drawing rein, they came plunging down upon me. I took a step. . . . My hand went to my eyes. . . . I lost the power to move. . . . Then I felt strong arms go around me and heard Phil crying, “My God, Joyce, I didn’t see, I wasn’t looking!” He dragged me to one side. The flying sand stung our faces. Down the field charged the troopers, standing in their stirrups with spears aloft, and shouting to their galloping horses. I lay quite unnerved against Phil’s shoulder, while he whispered over and over, “We didn’t see, dear; we were looking up the field. We didn’t see the brutes almost on you.”

“And not one of them pulled in,” I laughed hysterically. “Not one was going to stop!” Michael was so upset by the averted tragedy that he proposed our returning to the barracks while he ran for a waggon to take me

back to the cottage. But I had no intention of missing so splendid a show, and in a few minutes was ready to forget how nearly I had been ignominiously trampled to death. At the other side of the field, the horsemen wheeled, leaped to the ground, then sprang upright to the backs of their charging animals. As one man they tore by us in summer uniforms of white, belted over dark trousers, and with boots to their knees. Their rakish caps topped the thick hair of their race with an indescribable jauntiness. A barbarous yell came from their wide-open mouths, and their keen eyes flashed with that brutish lust for wanton war which makes them the darlings of the Tsar. Half of them acknowledge the Tsar's son as their Chief Hetman. They are the official murderers of the Empire. Of the imperial whip, the Government is the handle—the Cossacks the lash. These 500,000 cavalymen, born to rob and maim, are the corner-stone of the dynasty. Without their support, the monarchy could not be maintained. In return for their murderous obedience, they are held as the especial wards of their sovereign. They are better paid and cared for than other divisions of the army. They scorn the common soldiery. Their ancestry is Circassian, Greek, Turkish, and Slavonic. They are bred to shoot, to ride, to despise emotion, and, above all, to disregard suffering—even in their own ranks. At the behest of their ruler, they crush a mob, shoot into a crowd of peaceful workmen, assault and torture women. It is their trade, their vocation. If they did not give this kind of service, they would be of no more use to the autocracy than any other branch of the army. They are paid especially well to execute the most brutal of the Tsar's commands, and they



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earn their wage with a zeal which keeps him ever in their debt.

The manœuvres over, the troopers walked their horses in double file past our vantage-point back to the stables. Hand on hip, each man sat with arrogant grace, his bridle-hand holding a loose rein above the neck of a Circassian steed equal to an Arabian in fire and form.

"Last month," said Michael on our way back to the town, "a Jewish cabinet-maker was expelled from Arm-insk because he had not bribed the constable as generously as his neighbours. He stole back to get some tools he had forgotten. When the uriadnik heard of it, he reported it to the ispravnik, the police chief of the district. A day later, a dozen Cossacks galloped into the Jewish quarter. The man himself had gotten away again, but that did not matter. They dragged out other Jews and flogged them instead of the man they had been sent to find. Before they were done, there was a pogrom — a riot and a massacre. Ah, they would rather kill than ride, these Kazaks — and to ride is their life." We walked on silently until we came to the square and saw our smiling acquaintance, the merchant, standing before the inn. He was not the merchant only, but the inn-keeper, the vodka-seller, the banker, and the mortgage broker of the town. As in the south with our negroes, the peasant's labour is often mortgaged a year or more in advance. He is in debt to the store-keeper for food and clothes, and still more for brandy. It is not long before the merchant owns his body, his earning capacity, also. Or, if the muzhik owns a strip of land the merchant has a lien on that, or on the product of the tract.

"Sold for vodka," is the label pinned on many a worthless back.

Each "soul," as a male citizen is designated, is allotted a share of the communal land proportionate to the number of large or small mouths he must feed. If he is on good terms with the heads of the mir, or village parliament, he may receive several strips close together. If he has been so unfortunate as to incur their enmity, his land will probably be far from his izbá, and much time will be consumed in going to and fro. As co-operation is one of the distinguishing traits of the Russian muzhik's existence, so he prefers to dwell in little communities. There are comparatively few isolated farms, and consequently a vast tillage is uncultivated.

The square was enlivened to-day by a peasant fair, so dear to a muzhik. Carts were piled with produce, and with rolls of linen, brought in from smaller villages. The stalls of cheap trinkets were well patronised, and a fakir performing obvious tricks received favourable notice. Some cream-coloured cattle were tied to the rear of a teléga. At their feet a brawny farmer sprawled with his fellows, drinking tea. The women invariably had their heads tied up in pointed kerchiefs, and were bare-footed. The head-kerchief is the descendant of the veil, worn before Peter the First's modernising decrees.

"Have you bought all you need for your journey?" Phil asked Michael.

"Not quite all, Gospodin. The kupets has sent to Poltava for a suit of clothes like the Jews wear."

"I can advance you a week's pay if it would be a convenience."

"No, you are kind. I have a little money in the bank."

"Then when your clothes come, you will be ready to go? I think we shall be off by to-morrow night or Friday."

"Pardon me, you are wise not to stay much longer. If you did, it might be suspected that the Americans had really come, not to buy embroideries, but — to see my mother's lodger."

"I had thought of that, but we have a plausible reason for remaining another day or so, since you, our courier, have not yet completed your arrangements."

"It will be hard — saying good-bye." Michael's face saddened.

"Hard for all of us," I assented.

"You mean saying good-bye to Román. Ah," looking quickly about, "if he could go too — away from here — out of Russia!"

"That was what we hoped to accomplish by coming here," Phil answered under his breath.

Michael started. "You have found a way, then?"

"No, we have talked with him. He says there is no way." We looked up and saw Petrovsky within the shelter of the curtains. Happy, in his arms, gave a little wiggle of delight at sight of us, and he smiled.

"Poor fellow! He will be lonely without you, Michael."

"If only he could go too!" repeated the widow's son, as we opened the door and went in. "Here he is nothing, but outside Russia, what could he not accomplish! He knows languages; he is so great, so wise! There is no one in our party more capable."

“You are a Revolutionist?”

“I am Petrovsky’s pupil. All these months I have sat at his feet, and every day I have learned to love and believe in him more.” Tears stood in his eyes. “To see him suffer and grow weaker—to know that only freedom can make him strong again, and that he may die before that comes—!” His hands were clenched at his side, his chin unlifted. “If,” brokenly, “I only could do something to save him!” He straightened with a sudden emotion. His eyes started and his lips fell apart. For a moment he stood transfixed. Then—“Gospodin, I—will go out—into the air.” He lifted the latch and went down the step. “I will come back. Please tell my mother—I will come back to-night.”

We gazed at each other, perplexed. It was not like Michael, this erratic behaviour.

Petrovsky came to the stairs. “Your little dog is much company for me,” he said as we went up. “When I am sad, she understands. Always she is in my mood.”

“Would it comfort you to have her for your own? I will give her to you.” My voice shook a bit. “There is not much we can do for you.”

Petrovsky nodded. “Now I know the depth of your friendship for me!”

“But I mean it,” I persisted stoutly. “You may have her if she would help in your loneliness.”

“No, Mrs. Houghton.” He looked down at me. “But I shall like to remember that you not only came out of your way to see me, but would even have given me—your little dog!”

“Really—” I began, but Petrovsky only shook his head.

Shall I confess it? As I gathered up the black-eyed bundle, I had the heart to be glad she was still mine. And when, later, my husband pulled me close and whispered, "Good jená!" I felt almost a hypocrite.

We sat about the supper-table. It was seven o'clock. Michael had not come back. When we gave the mother his message, we had suppressed the manner of his exit, but a dozen times she looked anxiously out the window. She spoke to Petrovsky.

"Did Michael say where he was going?" he translated.

"No, he went towards the forest. He will be back soon, I am sure."

"Please tell her not to worry," I added. She tried to take comfort from our assurances, but she could not control the unsteadiness of her fingers as she drew the tea and waited upon us. A peculiarly tender tie bound her to her son. She had been left by her husband with her babe unborn. The boy had never known a father. As no word had ever come from him, they supposed him dead. Patience and self-forgetfulness had beautified a face which must otherwise have been plain. As the latch was raised, her eyes leaped with anticipation. It was Michael — an erect, changed Michael who opened the outer door and strode across the room.

"I have found a way," he said exultantly. His face shone with the radiance of inspiration. "I have found a way," he reiterated with an expression of ineffable joy. "Román," he cried softly, stretching out his arms, his eyes burning with the fires of self-denial, "you shall have my passport!" Slowly Petrovsky looked from Michael

to us and back again to the figure standing opposite. The mother rose to close the window.

"What is it, Michael?" asked the exile, his wan face perplexed. "What is it you say?"

"You shall take my passport, and go with the Gospodin as his courier. I have planned it —"

"And you?" inquired Petrovsky indulgently, as if questioning a fanciful child. "Will they give you another passport?"

"Perhaps," replied the boy, "I shall not need another."

The exile laughed mirthlessly. "Is there then a new law in Russia?"

"No, there is not a new law, but I know how to fix it. I have been thinking. Believe me."

"Ah, dear Michael, and would you do this for me?" With a lingering affection he looked upon the face of the youth whose tall, determined figure steadfastly confronted him. "You would give your liberty for mine!"

"It is not my liberty for yours. I shall go free also."

The mother gazed at her child, unable to understand the words which had so affected us. She regarded him wistfully, then looked toward Petrovsky with an unspoken question. In their own mellow tongue he told her what Michael had proposed. Her serene eyes turned to her son in silent dismay. "Michael!" she breathed. He spoke rapidly to her, comforting her, begging her to hear him through, explaining, so his gestures told us, what he had planned as he tramped the forest, and what his plans would mean for the prisoner.

And all the time Petrovsky sat sadly shaking his

head. "Poor boy, he has lost his reason!" I heard him exclaim.

But, as Michael told his story, his mother listened eagerly and her very being seemed to pulsate with the magnetism of his words. She turned to the sick man, and joined in her son's supplication with an ardour as appealing as his own. She reasoned with him, she entreated, she implored. She laid hold of his hands, pleading with agitation as Petrovsky continued to gaze at them compassionately and with a tender melancholy.

My heart bounded with renewed hope. If they persuaded him—we should not need to send bad news to Liuba! Surely he could not gainsay two so zealous for his happiness, so unmindful of themselves.

Phil sat staring across his folded arms. His eyes never left the face of his friend, prisoner of the Tsar.

As they continued to press their arguments upon him, his brows lowered and he contemplated mother and son with darkening eyes. Rising to his feet, he pushed back his chair. "Will they never desist!" he cried in anguish. "Do they think I can forever be calm? Liberty for me?" he laughed satirically. "I go free? Do you know what they have been saying?" He turned to us. "Michael tells me I shall go with you in his garb as the courier Kirsanov; that you will take me on your journey to Sevastopol. That there, I shall board a steamer for Constantinople, and that once in Constantinople—I may roam the world—a free man! I—" he jeered, "a free man, with the police at my heels, and the noose tightening at every step! Here, in Arminsk, I have liberty to live at least unharassed. I walk in the

streets, I visit my peasants, I have enough to eat. But," he bantered, "Michael would convince me that rather than content myself here, it were better to try to escape — to stumble into a yawning dungeon door, and there to mortify, waiting for release; that for me, existence in the village of Arminsk is not so agreeable as to battle for life in a Siberian mine! You, Michael," he twitted, pointing a derisive finger, "perhaps the widow Kirsanov's house is so ill a place in which to die, you would recommend me to find a way to the gallows, instead!" His eyes were glazed, his voice was terrible in its subdued intensity. "A free man! Outside my village prison, I should be free — to seek — my — doom!" he jested mockingly.

A step sounded under the window. "Who's that?" he muttered. We listened breathlessly. Michael stole to the window. It was only the village herder driving home the cows. "Just the pastuch," Michael told him. "Ah —!" as he drew the back of his hand across his moistened forehead. Michael sprang to him and would have helped him to a chair, but Román thrust out an arm and pushed him back. "Don't think," he went on in a voice thickened with emotion, "don't think I am insensate. I realise what you offer. Beyond the grasp of Russia, what powers are mine, I could exert for my countrymen. My pen would exhort the world to bring down the curtain on the tragedy of despotism; it would advertise the deception of the nations, the hoodwinking of envoys, the distortion of statistics, the suppression of skeletons, starved and massacred by famine and pogrom. Turkey has come under the ban of Europe; the Congo's atrocities are investigated. When Europe and America



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understand how much more iniquitous is Russian rule than Turkish and Belgian, they will not sit passive. . . . ”

“And you will venture nothing to apprise the nations — you with your talents and gift of tongues are idling away your life in the shadow of the Third Section! Petrovsky,” cried Phil, as he stood up, “don’t let this chance go by! Michael says he has found a way. Do not close your ears, but listen to him, not for your own sake — but for the sake of your countrymen!”

“And for the sake of Liuba!” I pleaded. “At Shulov she is waiting for word that you have escaped to a place where she can meet you and where you can call her — your wife!”

Petrovsky groaned and staggered. “My God! I had forgotten; in my obstinacy I had forgotten! Liuba — my wife!” Groping, he stumbled to a seat. His head lay on his arms across the chair-back as he moaned over and over the name that had undone him.

“Go on with your plan,” I whispered to Michael, perceiving the advantage of the moment. “How will you account for Román’s absence after we have gone?”

The boy leaned towards us across the littered table. “Everyone knows Román is ill. Last week the vratch himself came and said he must not go out alone. Very well. They know also that I am going away as interpreter with you. I have applied for my passport permitting me, if necessary, to go across the border. This passport describes me as tall — I am Román’s height; as dark-skinned — I am but a little darker than Román; as twenty-four — Román is twenty-seven; as smooth-shaven — Román shall shave his moustache. To-morrow my clothes will come from Poltava — Román

shall wear them. The train from Ekaterinoslav connects with the Moscow-Sevastopol express at Sinelnikovo on the main line. There is no train from here which reaches Ekaterinoslav in time to meet the branch train. So much the better. . . . To-morrow night I will get my passport and yours from the police. I will go to the traktir and bid good-bye to my friends. . . . Michael Kirsanov is going for a long journey . . . drink another glass of vodka with him! I will go even to the shrine in the church that people may see me saying a prayer for a safe journey. It will not be sacrilege. And I shall not forget to tell everyone how ill my mother's lodger is — that he cannot any longer sit up at the window, or see even the apothecary. I will order a covered tarantass. In it, three passengers will leave this house before dawn to drive eleven miles to Ekaterinoslav. Who will know Román Petrovsky from Michael Kirsanov? When, twelve hours later, you are in Sevastopol, who, still, will know him? And when he is landed from the steamer in Constantinople —" his voice thrilled us, "what matter if the whole world recognises him as Petrovsky, the exile and escaped prisoner!"

"A journey bravely planned! You have left uncovered but one point." Petrovsky raised his head. "One vital point. What would you do, Michael, after we had gone?"

"Don't you see? I should remain in your room, in bed if necessary, until you had had time to cross to Turkey. Little good it would do the police to discover your absence, then!"

"Dear, impractical boy! And when they did find it out, you would still remain in my room and be taken

in my stead? Do you think I would go at the sacrifice of your life and your mother's? They would shoot you to death for treason if you aided my escape."

"I do not care what you say," obdurately. "I know a way to save my mother and myself. I have thought of everything. She will trust me."

"Tell me how you have planned it."

Michael's face grew stern. "I cannot tell you. I am not a child. When I say I know how to save myself, you must not question it."

"Very well, Michael. Then I will not go. I should be a coward to escape at your peril. Until you tell me your plan, we will forget the subject." Petrovsky turned wearily towards the door. "Good-night, my friends."

"Wait!" called Michael, "wait, Román. If I tell you the part about my mother, will that do?"

Román came slowly back. "Well, tell me that then."

"My mother will stay here a few days after you go. Then a telegram will call her to Posen. I will write one of her sisters to send for her, pretending they need her in sickness. With my mother in Prussia, my part is easy, believe me."

"I do not believe you, Michael."

"Ah, Román, you are making it hard. I cannot tell you more, and yet — if you knew, you would say it was a safe way. I am strong and young . . . " His eyes implored. "Can't you trust me, my comrade?" He bent to reply to his mother as she touched his blouse.

The exile's gaze sought ours, and he made a gesture of despair. "There is no use. I cannot let him suffer

for me. He is but a boy — and rash. I could not trust his discretion much as I love and admire his zeal.”

“Why not?” Phil questioned. “You say he has a good mind. Reward him by your confidence. We will leave him some of the funds sent Liuba to aid her comrades.”

“But suppose his plan went awry. How could I bear the thought that our happiness, Liuba’s and mine, was bought at the price of — well, let us say his freedom only.”

“I have faith in Michael’s assurances,” I maintained. “He is not an ordinary boy. But suppose he were taken — would his punishment be any harder to endure than yours? He is a Revolutionist also. You would resent a comrade’s interference in what you believed your duty. His mother will be comfortably established in Posen with her sisters. He will have no entanglements . . . he can save himself. But if — and I do not believe in the possibility of this if — he should not succeed in getting out of the country, isn’t your freedom of more value to your country than his, and would he not exult in the chance of serving Russia by freeing you even at the cost of his life?”

Petrovsky sat with his chin on his folded hands, looking into the dusk, for it was not yet quite dark. For a long time no one spoke. Michael stood by his mother’s chair, watching with painful fervour the face of his hero. His mother laid her cheek to his broad palm, caressingly. Gradually, peace stole upon us in the twilight. Without turning his head, Petrovsky reached a hand towards Michael, who took it in silence. At last, “Michael, my comrade!” Petrovsky murmured, and raised his eyes. With

a cry of ecstasy, the boy knelt at the exile's knee, and there rushed from his fervid lips the resonant syllables of their dramatic language. Petrovsky lifted the inspired face and, very slowly, laid his lips to Michael's forehead. When the youth arose, he was as one deified. He kissed his mother, who cried a little over him and over the victory he had won. Phil put out his hand. "Petrovsky," he began, hoarsely, but could get no further. I was weeping for joy at thought of Liuba.



Chapter XVI

COMRADES OF A REVOLUTIONIST

*E*KATERINOSLAV, City of Catherine, lay hours behind us. On either side, the sombre steppes reached to the horizon. There had been light rains during the night, but still, above the occasional hillocks, there hung a dusty haze. Water was glistening in pools, and thirsty herds came to drink at stavoks which yesterday were only dry basins on the prairie's surface. The September rains had tinted the parched waste a katy-did green. Thistles were growing in purple disorder, and so tall that they cast long jagged shadows. A rising wind swept toward us clouds of scurrying wind-witch weed. Acres of wild tulip and mignonette succeeded leagues of blackened steppe, not long since licked clean of its wheat-fields, by tongues of flame. At the whistle of the locomotive, bevvies of earth-hares darted to their burrows. Outside the high palings of farm-houses swarmed dogs, which, though half-wolf, are more keen to kill a wolf than their better-bred brothers. The lark, the eagle, the vulture, the bustard, wing the heights above the steppes. Locusts sometimes darken the sky with their legions, and toads spring up after rains to carpet the earth.

Flocks of fat-tailed sheep browse near the roving waggon of the Tatar tshabawn. On this limitless battleground, horses contend with wolves, while the herdsman in leather kaftan and hooded cloak rides furiously to the assault, hurling his wolf-club and wielding the

thonged harabnik. Each wolf in Russia consumes annually about four head of cattle, sheep, or dogs. Also each year one human being is killed to every pack of a hundred.

We crossed a bridge which spans the straits of Enikaleh, where the muddy and nearly fresh water of the Sea of Azov marries the sluggish flow of the Putrid Sea. We had reached the steppes of the Crimea. A hot wind blew from the west across salt-marshes and boundless pasture-lands. In a corner of the compartment sat Petrovsky. Since we had boarded the train in the misty hours of early morning, he had scarcely spoken. His face was expressionless, his mind seemed blank. Except for a ceaseless movement of his hands, he sat in an apparent stupor. He declined food or wine. His eyes were dull, and fixed for the most part on his restless fingers. Occasionally, his lips moved. The suppressed excitement of our leave-taking, the racking drive from Arminsk had exhausted him. As the Moscow train approached Sinelnikovo, his efforts at control had been pitiable; but the lethargy which followed frightened us lest it should threaten the safety of our undertaking. Furthermore, we realised the impossibility of his going alone to Constantinople unless he could free himself from the pall which enveloped him. So we sat, in silence and suspense.

But as the hours drew on, reaction came, and his worn body revived somewhat. I heard him whisper "Liuba!" and a smile played about his mouth. The sun threw off its cloud-veil, and a ray fell on the strip of red carpet. His face brightened. We crossed the stream which divides the depressing plains of the north and west

from the paradise of the lower Crimea. For the first time, the landscape interested him. . . . He looked out at the smiling meadows of the river Salghir, and commented on the increasing beauty of the scene. Fruit-trees and poplars marked the path of the stream, creeping with summer sloth beneath ruined walls of Tatar villages. It sauntered through gardens and orchards, at the foot of green slopes and precipitous cliffs to the door of the ancient city, called by the Tatars "The White Mosque," but known to more prosaic times as Simpheropol, the "Gathering-place" of races.

The train paused at the station. An Armenian fruit-seller raised to the level of our open window, his tray of nectarines, apricots, plums, apples, and grapes, which proved to be not so grateful to the palate as to the eye. A pair of Nogai Tatars, vain of their upturned Mongolian eyes and flat noses, promenaded the platform, indifferent to our scrutiny. Young Russian women in summer muslins chatted with uniformed gallants, not so engrossed by the fascinations of their own countrywomen as to ignore the vivacious charms of Tatar girls veiled to their eyes in the filmy fereedjè. Their little red boots twinkled in and out beneath skirt-hems and overhanging drawers. The contrasting civilisation of West and East was symbolised by the vehicles which crowded the sandy space about the station. A two-horse drosky touched hubs with a cart drawn by double-humped camels, which had seized the moment to take a siesta while their Crimean driver gaped at the smart equipage of a Government official come to welcome an arriving guest. From his secluded corner, Petrovsky watched the picture with growing animation. His blood seemed to quicken, and

by degrees he shook off the cloak of melancholy and exhaustion which had fallen upon him.

He spoke of the historical interest of the peninsula, known to the world for twenty-four centuries; of the excavations near Simpheropol which have established the existence of fortifications built by the Scythians before Christ; of the disastrous battle fought between the allies and Russia near the station of Alma through which we passed. Alma is the Tatar word for apple. Acres of apple orchards give this village its name.

At Bakshisarai, a newly-married couple descended. Their blissful state was disclosed not only by their conscious attitude, but by the raising of a parasol which showered hops on the head of the bride. Petrovsky laughed softly with us at their efforts to appear indifferent to the amusing incident, as they climbed with dignity into an écru-topped vehicle to drive, doubtless, to the Khan's palace where lovers of romance may put up for the night under the royal roof of ancient Crim Tatar rulers.

"It is a favourite wedding-journey for Russian young people," said Petrovsky. "There are plenty of sentimental excursions to be taken to caves, fortresses, and deserted villages in the hills near Mangup. My pupil, the English boy, came here on his — honeymoon, you call it?" He sat up and aroused the sleeping Happy, who drowsily resisted his efforts to play with her.

Cliffs and catacombed rocks guard the famous little town of Inkerman, known to Russians not only as a battle-field, but because of its monastery cut out of rock, which stands close to the railway tracks. A mosque-like entrance leads directly into the cliff. Above it,

quaint windows open from the rock walls. A monk stepped through a latticed door into a balcony. In deference to a holy painting over the arch he crossed himself perfunctorily as he stood in flowing black, watching the train crawl away to the south.

“We shall soon be in Sevastopol.” Phil closed his watch and began to gather up our belongings. We approached the Crimean port which, soon after Russian occupancy in 1784, was fortified to Catherine the Great’s order with stones taken from the dead city of Khersonesus, an important town five centuries before Christ, on the site of which Vladimir, Russia’s first Christian prince, was baptised.

The strain of the past hours became almost unbearable. I watched Román anxiously, praying that he might control his now very apparent agitation before the moment came for us to leave the seclusion of our compartment for the thronged station and busy streets of a big city. If the suspicious glance of a political spy should recognise in our companion the student leader who once had eluded the Petersburg police, we should all be taken. . . . Further than that we had not the courage to imagine our lot. A nausea of suspense swept over me. I jumped at the sound of the guard’s key in the lock of the door. Phil was pulling at straps and snapping locks with nervous vigour. As the station came in view, he whispered: “You stay here, while I go for some porters. Keep back from the windows of course. It will be better to let the crowd dwindle a bit before we go through the station.” He partly closed the door and went out. Porters rushed back and forth in the corridor. . . . Friends wept and laughed demonstra-

tively at the arrival of, to us, quite uninteresting individuals. . . . Once a trainman peered in . . . minutes passed . . . Philip came at last. "It's alright, dear," as my eyes questioned. "I was trying to find a closed carriage, but they are all these basket phaeton, umbrella top affairs. I am sorry. Shall we go now?" Petrovsky got bravely to his feet, and steadied himself with a noble effort. Porters shouldered our luggage. We made our way quickly—and safely—to the carriage. "Wetzel's," said Phil to the cabman. Slowly our two horses mounted the hill to the town. Shade trees made the heat endurable when we were once on the summit. The hotel, set amid shrubs, and with a tinkling fountain in front, offered a cool refuge from the burning streets, and from the fancied scrutiny of every passerby. We made our companion comfortable in a room adjoining ours. So far as we knew, the journey was successfully accomplished. We could only pray that by this time to-morrow, things would be as well with us. . . .

The town, piled like a citadel, street above street, surveys the hills, the fortifications and the shipping of the harbour. We sat at our windows after dinner contemplating the beautiful scene before us.

"The Euxine!" I murmured.

"My highway to liberty." Petrovsky closed his eyes and smiled.

"Strange—" mused Phil, "we look at a map and read the names of cities and seas. They signify nothing to us at the moment; and yet some day those indifferent letters may spell a story in our own lives so vital we cannot understand why the very names projected no

clairvoyant picture for us in other days. The Black Sea! Sevastopol! Here we sit waiting for a ship, just an everyday ship, which to us is a glorious aid to freedom!"

In the grey silence of the room our thoughts sped to Shulov, and to Arminsk. By to-morrow, Liuba should have the telegram sent in cipher an hour ago. In four days her lover would be in Paris. Perhaps she would be awaiting him there!

Michael's mother would soon leave for Posen, having announced that she had engaged a neighbour to care for her sick lodger. And Michael? We did not know where Michael would be to-morrow . . . or the next day . . . or the next. . . .

We turned from anxious thoughts of him to talk of our meeting in Paris, where Román and Liuba should greet us as husband and wife; and of future visitations between Paris and London, when the conversation would often dwell upon days at Shulov and Arminsk. At last, we said good-night, Petrovsky gripping our hands in voiceless gratitude — we clinging to his with stifled prayers for the sure achievement of his goal.

Twenty-four hours later, we sat alone looking on the same view of hill and sea. The ship from Odessa had entered and cleared. From her after-deck, a passenger listed as Michael Kirsanov had waved us a cautious farewell.

We had spent a restless day driving to the Monastery of St. George crowning the promontory of Cape Partheniké, and to the village of Balaclava, where we made an unsuccessful effort to submerge suspense in historical reminiscence. We had stood on the muddy shores of the



PECHORSKAIA MONASTERY, KIEV



hill-bound bay, through whose cork-screw mouth twisted the prow of the British relief ship, *Agamemnon*. Outside the town we had mounted the rise of ground charged by Scarlett's Light Brigade. We had tried to bring back the stirring picture by reciting to each other what snatches we recalled of the Tennyson poem. But the imagery of reckless troopers was less distinctly limned on the mental canvas than the face of a rapturous girl, and the lines of a vanishing ship.

On our return from the long, hot drive we went into the Museum near the hotel, and made an attempt to interest ourselves in the portraits and ship models which recall the heroic days of the siege. The farm-house, where died Lord Raglan, Commander-in-Chief of the British; the French and English cemeteries; the Redan fortifications; the monuments—we saw them all painstakingly. But our craving for proscribed “tours” was dulled; the glamour of the Unusual had lost its piquancy.

Two jaded tourists climbed into a carriage on a sultry September morning. We had lingered in Sevastopol hoping for a cable from Román, which he had promised to send upon his arrival, if possible. No word had come. We set out on the road to Yalta with heavy hearts.

Our steamer trunks and my gay peasant chest were strapped on the rack at the rear of the chaise. From Yalta we should take a steamer direct to Odessa. The landscape was attuned to our mood . . . dull, brown, dejected. “Supposing—supposing—” the carriage wheels creaked. Supposing a spy on the dock had recognised the features of the escaping exile; supposing he had telegraphed the steamer's agents to detain him on board the ship of the Russian Steam Navigation Com-

pany; supposing Liuba should go on to Paris and Petrovsky should not come. Supposing he were ill, and, though safe, alone in a strange room, needing friends. . . . “Supposing — supposing —” the chaise wheels creaked.

Suddenly, our driver-guide lifted his whip and pointed to craggy hilltops: we were on the threshold of the Crimean Paradise — the Tauric Arcadia — realm of seaside mountains; of trickling brooks; of ravishing valleys; of forests and mossy springs; of steep descent and perilous climb; of gleaming roads, and mountain inns, and villages clinging to vine-draped cliffs; of Russian palace and Tatar hut; of fig-tree and plum, olive and pine; of time-eaten mosques and tombs of porphyry. Through the valley of the Baidar and up a shady slope our long-tailed horses climbed to the summit where the arched gate of Baidar commands the sea. The driver unhitched his horses and ran to a sprawling inn for a samovar.

He came back with a melon under one arm and a basket of walnuts under the other. We opened the hamper brought from the hotel in Sevastopol. With the dark blue sea at our feet, we sipped the pure wine of the Crimea and munched caviar sandwiches, while the cocher brewed tea and fed his equine trio. “After all, what is the use of worrying?” Phil gazed across the water towards the City of Constantine. “‘Silence is golden’ — ‘no news is good news,’” he quoted prosaically. “It isn’t reasonable to think Román is in the grip of the police just because no cablegram has come. Some Turk operator may be to blame — or a Russian messenger-boy. Let’s be optimists . . . the scenery is great . . . the weather’s clearing . . . Román is on the train

for Paris. Eh, Joyce?" It was impossible to be down-cast amid such uplifting scenes. Phil's reviving spirits inspired me. As we rumbled down into another valley our mood was more receptive. Nature, as if to distract us from anxious fears, spread her beauties prodigally before us. Naked masses of limestone were screened with cypress and oak. Castellated cliffs sentinelled valley and sea. We had reached a summer-land never chilled by frost. At the old post-station of Kikineis, a glimpse of Happy brought a flock of dark-skinned urchins about the chaise, and they held up their hands and clamoured for her as she stood with her paws on the seat-back, ears pointed and tongue out. Their fathers were lolling under the earth roofs of their shacks, slender mountaineers with red-blond beards and unnaturally high foreheads.

Little villages were strung along the highway like beads on a string: rough beads of Tatar make, with glints of Eastern reds and yellows.

The Genoese who established themselves on this coast of the Black Sea at the time their countryman, Columbus, was crossing to find America, left a fortress near the hamlet of Limèn as a monument to their former sovereignty over the Tatar. To-day it surveys a riot of natural forces symbolic of the human warfare once waged among these mountains. Upheaved rocks and volcanic terraces go tumbling down to the sea, and uncanny shapes leer at the traveller like the gargoyles of Notre Dame.

The road to Alupka through the valley of Cimiez, so fair that "here one forgets the beauties of Switzerland," winds by the sea-washed gardens of the estate once owned by Prince Woronzov, former governor of Russia's south-

eastern provinces. The half-Moorish, half-English palace is made of porphyry quarried from the crater of a dead volcano. Pools of trout, fountains, orange-trees and rose gardens lie on a plateau with a background of mountain verdure. The village of Alupka itself is a haven for invalids, an expensive haven, it is true, but one much in favour with well-to-do Russians. Between Alupka and Yalta, the Russian Newport in point of fashion, the drive constantly recalls the south coast of Italy. The soil yields the pomegranate, the juniper, the fig and the low-spreading olive. The villas of royalty and nobility look coquettishly from their screens of shrubbery like pretty women from behind their veils. And always there is the sea at their feet. There is a bijou estate which was originally built by that ancestor of Count Serge de Witte who came from Holland. It neighbours the entrancing village, Orianda, where the First Alexander dreamed, for once, to good purpose. Among the rocks and recesses of the sea-coast he grew the vine of the grape, and built himself a retreat. The red palace at Livadia is the Crimean home of the present imperial family. The lawns and terraces, ornamented with flowers and statuary, border the post-road on either side. Vineyards, groves and gardens yield sweet odours of grape and pine, lily and rose. Beyond Yalta lies the most beautiful estate in the Crimea — the Upper Massandra. The imperial vineyards near by give a wine of rare bouquet.

We spent the night at the Hôtel de Russie, in Yalta, where the service and appointments were quite commensurate with the exorbitant tariff. We were the only Anglo-Saxon guests; indeed, few tourists other than Rus-

sian find their way to the Crimea. It is one of the rarely delightful nooks of the earth where the "tripper," in the American acceptance of the word, has not penetrated. Yalta is a resort of the Russians, for the Russians.

The voices of gypsy singers in a near-by garden restaurant droned us off to sleep. Beneath our windows, the surf boomed all night long. The brilliance and warmth of South Italy was in the morning sun. Moored off shore was the white yacht of a Grand Duke, lording it grandly over the flock of lesser craft which hovered near like fawning favourites. The beach was festive with bathing men and maidens whose gay laughter carried above the rush of the waves. Mammās and grandmammas, in more or less unbecoming attire, chaperoned their bright-eyed charges from the sands. Many of the mermaids wore white bathing dresses, sustaining the motive which prevails in this glittering City of Frivolity. The gaunt mountain which crowds the town to the edge of the water, scorns disapprovingly its giddy footstool, and lifts its haughty head to vistas of valleys and hills reaching beyond the yailas and craigs of Gurzūv to the vineyards of Alushta on the east coast.

Bound for Odessa, our steamer turned its back upon laughing Yalta. We rounded the southerly curve of the peninsula, studded with scenic jewels — royal parks, villas overhanging the shore, gloomy cypresses, fragrant gardens, precipitous slopes, cloud-topped mountains. Before dark we were at Sevastopol. Passengers disembarked, and embarked. Once more the ship's black nose pointed out to sea, and turned northwest towards the un-Russian commercial capital of the Empire.

We had an excellent dinner in the luxurious salon, and went early to our pleasant cabin to sleep away the night hours of our Black Sea voyage. Two young men were smoking by the deck-rail as we emerged from our morning tea. They were students, we knew, from their modest uniforms and caps. They offered Phil a light for his post-breakfast cigarette. He asked some trivial tourist's question. They were agreeably communicative. In a few moments we were chatting convivially. They were students of law at Odessa University, and brothers. The younger was tall, with a handsome dark face. They had been the previous summer to New York to visit a brother employed there in a steamship office, and were childishly pleased to meet Americans travelling in their country. "And Russia—has it interested you?" the elder asked. We responded enthusiastically, and they both smiled with gratification. "Ah, but America is better!" they sighed.

"Then why do you stay in Russia?"

"We are finishing our law course. Of what use would the Russian code be in America? And besides, there is much to love in our own country. Its natural resources are the richest in the world; it has the largest rivers, the best soil, the greatest area. Its mines and forests are inexhaustible. And yet—Do you know our poet, Nekrassov? He says: 'You are indigent while you possess plenty; you are mighty and yet powerless, you little Mother Russia!'"

A white mist dimmed the city as we crept prudently into the harbour at half-speed. The Turks' name for Odessa is "The Merchant Prince." Its earliest history is associated with commerce. Since the third century,

trading Slavs, Genoese, Poles, Greeks, Turks and Albanians have had settlements on these northern shores of the Euxine, called the "Black" Sea because ignorant navigators thought it treacherous. The Russian Odessa was founded by Catherine the Great. Though the fourth in population, it is the first city of Russia in point of trade, principally because of the fact that it is the shipping-port for the Black-Earth country.

"You will almost forget that you are in Russia until you leave Odessa," said the brother who walked at my side as we ascended the celebrated steps leading from the steamer landing to the Nikolaievsky Boulevard. The statue which welcomed us with hand outstretched commemorates the French Duc de Richelieu who emigrated to Russia when he found revolutionised France too democratic to suit his tastes, and who became the city's first governor. The statue is superfluous: the progressive, clean, well-paved metropolis of the South is his monument. Clouds and a damp, chilling wind contrasted depressingly with the sunshine of the Crimean coast. But the sun came in the afternoon, and, with it, our mannerly ship acquaintances who had volunteered to show us about their city. The streets resembled those of a German rather than a Russian town. Though the population of 500,000 is half Slavonic, it is the foreign half which gives to this port its thriving aspect.

"Otherwise," remarked the elder brother, Furstman, "how do you account for the superior sanitation, the unusual number of schools and colleges, and the well-lighted avenues?" They exhibited with a great deal of pride the handsome modern buildings of the University of New Russia, successor to the Richelieu Lyceum. The

president is a political prisoner, on parole. The students are proverbially revolutionary in their sympathies, and, indeed, Odessa as a city is the *bête noir* of the Government. Rebellion is in the atmosphere. Prince K. had told us of a friend who was for six tumultuous months manager at Odessa of the Russian Steam Navigation Company, owner of more steamers than any firm in the Empire. His life was so persistently threatened by disgruntled workmen that the mail which did not bring him a menacing letter was an agreeable exception. He sent his wife and three children back to Petersburg, but stayed on himself, determined to down the animosity if possible. He did not sleep two successive nights under the same roof, staying one night at his club, the next at a friend's house, or at a hotel. He was a mild, kindly-disposed man and thought it impossible that he should be for long the victim of unreasonable hostility. But matters did not mend and the strain began to affect his health. Finally he had to resign the position. A few days later, the man who took his place was murdered by the company's employés, who, according to Russian standards at least, were well-paid and considerably treated.

Everyone remembers the comic opera mutiny of a few years ago which had its beginning in the death, by an officer's hand, of a midshipman who complained of the ship-fare. The officers of the *Kniaz Potëmkin*, the locale of the farce, found themselves characteristically incapable of mastering the situation and took to the boats. The sailors, intoxicated by their easy victory, celebrated by bombarding Odessa. The exploding shells fired warehouses and docks, and terror reigned. Under



THE THEATRE SQUARE, WARSAW

cover of their cannonading, the mutineers made off with the cruiser. But a few days later they were led back by the ear like naughty and very hungry truants, to take their bitter punishment.

As we drove along the wide boulevards, past the fine Public Library, the shady cathedral square, the beautifully proportioned theatre, our young students told us about the riots of October, 1906, when dead bodies were carted through the streets by the waggon-load. Business was suspended; innocent citizens were at the mercy of the Cossacks; mothers saw their babies dismembered and were themselves struck down as they knelt moaning in the streets. We drove to the brothers' lodgings in the rue Richelieu so that they might show us some photographs which they had taken during the massacre. In one, a bearded Jew with a plaintive face, walked beside a rough cart and its white-covered load: perhaps one of the bodies under the sheet belonged to a child of his. The ghastly procession was guarded by soldiers; their bayonets had, the previous day, been turned against the living creatures whose cadavers they escorted ceremoniously to their graves.

Said the elder brother, "The Government takes advantage of the national hatred of the Jew to rouse the Slavs to some kind of concerted feeling, and to unite minds disaffected by the tyranny of the bureaucracy. The Jew is often the butt, the scape-goat. He is black-mailed by officials, secure in the knowledge that they will not be molested so long as it is a Jew who is baited. When he does not or cannot give as much as is demanded he is falsely accused and forthwith punished for a crime of which he is innocent. His family is broken up and

his business ruined. He must pay well to exist in even tolerable peace and comfort. The Russian Jew is the most atrociously mistreated creature on earth."

"I presume he would have more sympathy from foreign nations if he were not cursed by the fact that he *is* a Jew, and that often he is dirty and grasping. That is not an altruistic attitude, I confess."

"There is a Semitic sect which even a Slav respects — they are the Karaims or Karaïtes. They are a noble people, upright, fair in their dealings, well-formed and featured, and of a kindly nature. They accept the Scriptures literally, rejecting the interpretation of the rabbis. The rabbi of Choufut Kalè, a fortress near Bakshisarai in the Crimea, is their spiritual chief. In the 'Valley of Jehosaphat' near by it is the ambition of every Karaïte to be laid at rest, just as the Chinaman yearns to sleep with his fathers, no matter how far he may have strayed from his native land."

Everywhere we drove and walked we met Italians, Greeks, Germans, and Armenians. They were the merchants and bankers of the prosperous city; to the Russians have been left the more menial occupations.

In accordance with common custom among hotel proprietors in Russia, our Odessa host attempted to exaggerate the police charge for passport registration, which, after being victimised once or twice, we had discovered to be, legally, but twenty kopeks. The fee as charged on our various hotel bills usually ranged from five to fifteen rubles. It was always Philip's parting duty to explain the "mistake" to an apologetic manager or proprietor. The Jewish inn-keeper at Odessa assumed a distressed expression and rubbed his hands abjectly when

apprised of his clerk's error. An array of hitherto unseen servants, almost as impressive as that which confronts one at the Berlin "Bristol," flanked our exit. By a night train we left the least characteristic city of Russia for the one most typical of all — Kiev, Cradle of the Empire.

The first-class compartments were all engaged. Our student friends consoled us by saying we should rest almost as well in a second-class reservation at about half the price. Nowhere is railway travel so cheap as in Russia. There are three, sometimes four classes, distinguished on the outside by the colour of the cars.

When we were ready to go to bed, the trainman-of-all-work pulled out the back of our double seats, thereby creating a second-story ledge for some late-comer. A chintz curtain was hung in a crude effort to foster modesty; the windows were tightly closed; with the bringing of two pillows, for which we paid extra, the night arrangements were complete.

As usual, we were aroused at exasperatingly frequent intervals to humour the demands of numerous relays of master conductors and inspectors. About one o'clock, Philip, who had already had several wordless contentions concerning the raising of the window, awoke and sat up in disgust. For the fourth time the guard had thwarted his desire for ventilation, and someone climbing onto the upper shelf had planted a well-booted foot upon his shoulder. I glanced up from the couch opposite. A smartly attired captain was divesting himself of sword and spurs and folding his heavy coat for a pillow, preparatory to composing himself to rest. Phil stealthily opened the window, and again we dozed. Perhaps an

hour later, a lantern flashed in our faces. The trainman shook the sleeping officer and remonstrated with him. He had no sleeping-check, we gathered from the gesturing . . . therefore he must surrender his narrow bed and betake himself to the smoking-car. He arose with unexpected tractability, belted on his sword, fastened his spurs anew, shook out his coat and descended, politely apologising for disturbing us for the second time. Amidst the fumes of pipes and cigarettes he propped himself uncomfortably against a side-post and meekly made the best of an affair which would have inflamed to protestation anyone but a Slav.

There was a great crowd at Kazatin. A miracle ikon was being returned to one of the sixty churches of the Russian Jerusalem. From the demonstration on the platform the presence of the holy painting had been attended by gratifying recoveries. The priestly escort was laden with combs of honey and tinsel flowers, and there was much bowing and kissing and crossing as the ikon was brought into the car and placed on a seat opposite us, where it rode in state the rest of the way to Kiev.

Kiev's hotels are too new to be in the picture. The tall business buildings of recent architecture are in modern contrast to its churches and catacombs. Its legendary history goes back to St. Andrew, who is said to have planted a cross on one of its three hills, and to have prophesied that one day a city should rise on the high banks of the Dnieper. Three Polish brothers laid the foundation for the fulfilment of this prophecy, and gave to the infant town the name of the elder brother, Kii. Later years saw contests between Norman knights and

the Norman son and grandson of the founder of the Rurik dynasty, first established at Novgorod. For seven centuries, the descendants of this warrior were the monarchs of Russia.

Following the internecine conflicts at Novgorod, Kiev became the capital of the second Empire, and was for three hundred years the prize for which ambitious princes fought. In succession to Novgorod and Kiev, Vladimir, Moscow and Petersburg became the capitals of the monarchy.

The Prince Vladimir, who ruled Kiev in the tenth century thrust the Christian religion upon a heathen people as a matter of policy, for he wished to unite his subjects under one faith. He decided not to become a Mohammedan since he did not wish to give up his wine; he considered the possibility of turning Jew, but changed his mind when he was told that the Jews were under a curse. As some of his merchants brought back enthusiastic accounts of the rich ceremonial of the churches in Constantinople, he investigated the Byzantine religion, and enamoured of subsequent reports, was forthwith baptised and demanded the baptism of all his kingdom. Those who refused to put on a new faith as they would a new coat, were esteemed enemies of the Empire.

Priests, monks, and metropolitans were imported to instruct the nation in the lessons of Christianity, and, in place of idols, ikons were set up in new temples dedicated to one instead of many gods.

The people learned these lessons by rote when the Greek Orthodox Church was first established in Russia — they know them only by rote to-day. They are still

pagans; ritual is their god; ikons are their idols. Devotion to the forms of the Church is fostered by the Government for the same politic reason which actuated Vladimir to compel conversion. The Church is the unifying influence of the Empire. Its priests are Government agents. Their sermons are censored to exclude indiscreet teachings which might enlighten their parishioners. The village popes are encouraged to decree extra holy days to increase the consumption of vodka, and receive a commission from the Government on the sales.

Senator Beveridge asserts in his "Russian Advance" that the adherents of the "True Faith" are moved to observe the exacting rites of their church by heart-impulse. He says he was so apprised by Russians in exalted positions. The Senator from Indiana while in Russia was the guest of officials who fêted and frequently misinformed him. A bureaucrat, so any honest Russian will tell you, is the last personage from whom to expect reliable intelligence. He is schooled in misrepresentation.

Stolypin, "the most two-faced statesman in Europe," is a past master at fooling the world. He announces, for instance, that twelve thousand political prisoners have recently been exiled, whereas the actual police records show that seventy thousand is nearer the correct number. He depreciates the prevailing terrors of famines and silences the news of massacres.

One reading the Beveridge book grows quite optimistic concerning Russian affairs. The condition of the peasants is encouraging . . . they are buying American farm implements extensively . . . their children — 4,000,000 out of 160,000,000 inhabitants — are being taught in new and comfortable school buildings. . . .

The Government is the patron of its farmers and artisans. . . . Things are looking up for Russia — if you read “The Russian Advance.” It is this distortion of facts which has for so long deceived the nations.

We drove in the afternoon to the American Consulate to get our mail. As we wended our way back through the Podol, the business and residential quarter which lies between the hills and the river, we opened our letters one by one. Home seemed further away here than in modern Petersburg. In the Russian Mecca, the monastic walls of her holiest shrine looked down upon us, and a mediæval fortress recalled days when invaders came down the Dnieper in boats, or advanced across the plains bent upon conquest. Despite the glaring newness of some of its buildings, we received everywhere the impression of antiquity which distinguishes Kiev.

There was a letter from Jerry, a hilariously joyful one. Cicely, unable to keep her own secret, had written them that she and her mother would reach Warsaw about September seventeenth. He would arrive there the previous day from Petersburg, and he begged that we meet him at the Hotel Bristol. “She shall never go back as Cicely Hazard, so prepare to serve as best man and matron-of-honour!”

“Do you suppose he means it?”

“He wouldn’t be the Jerry we know if he didn’t.”

“But what will Cicely’s mother say?”

“It is just possible, Philip, that Cicely’s mother may already have a suspicion that, after this meeting, her services as chaperone may not be required. Mothers have a way of guessing.”

“Yours didn’t,”

"You didn't yourself."

"Neither did you."

"Well — I knew you would sometime."

"Sometime what?"

"Propose. Your eyes told me so before you knew it yourself."

"Then you should have confided in me so I could have asked you sooner."

"The waiting was too sweet."

"Sweeter than the realisation?"

"No, silly, nothing could be sweeter than that — or this."

Our stout little horse had mounted the steep hill to the church of Andrew the Apostle, and, leaving the drosky below, we had climbed the parapet which surveys the great bridge, the endless steppes, the river flowing at the foot of the leafy Podol, the monasteries, the bastions of the fort. When we went down again, the *isvostchik* smiled so broadly at us that I wondered whether he had seen Philip when he kissed me.

Within the ancient earth-works of the city stands the comparatively small church of St. Sophia, one of the first Orthodox cathedrals built in Russia. Though it has often been remodelled and repaired, much of the original edifice remains. It was finished during the reign of Vladimir's son, Yaroslav, in 1037. Its mosaics and frescoes are the pride of Russia and the wonder of archæologists. In a chapel is the tomb of Yaroslav himself. The most beautifully decorated church in the Empire is the one dedicated to the canonised Vladimir. The paintings are by modern artists as the church was inaugurated by the present Tsar in 1896, though begun thirty years be-

fore. The mural ornamentation, the bronzes and the massive altar vessels are all superb.

We slept that night in a plain but very clean room in the lavra inn, under the same roof with possibly two hundred pilgrims. In the morning, a monk brought us tea and accepted our offering for the night's accommodation.

In the bake-house near by, other brothers were making and selling holy wafers of assorted sizes. A modern printing press was operated by monk printers who annually bring into the lavra treasury over a hundred thousand rubles. The pamphlets and hymn-books published at the Pechorsky Monastery are in especial demand by the faithful. We followed the devout procession of pilgrims up an avenue, lined with cells, to the Cathedral of the Ascension of the Mother of God. Like nearly everyone else, we had bought a large round wafer. Upon it we wrote the names of three friends for whom we wished to ask a blessing, and kneeling for a moment with the ragged throng, we asked their safe-keeping wherever they might be.

A quarter of a million pilgrims annually visit this lavra. Spring and summer are the most popular seasons, but hundreds come every week until late fall. We had seen them from the railway trudging along the roads to Kiev; some had come from the uttermost corners of the Empire, having begged enough to keep them from perishing on the way. For three days they may stay free of expense in the lavra inn. By the payment of a small sum they may remain three weeks longer.

We stood outside the church to watch the parade of zealots going up and down the steps. Those who had come to be cured had prayed before the renowned miracle

ikon of the Death of the Mother of God, which is painted on cypress and sparkles with diamonds in the candle-light. Some who had entered on crutches were making a brave effort to walk now without limping. Many were weeping with joy, believing themselves to have been cured of their ills. A mother held her sick baby close, her face alive with hope, for had she not pressed the mite's cheek to the ikon's glass covering while she prayed for its recovery? The tattered multitude passing into the church looked into the uplifted countenances of those crowding to the fresh air, and went forward with intensified faith believing they, too, would be healed.

We entered the catacombs with the pilgrims, each carrying a lighted taper through a high narrow passage. Here lie the saints who founded the monastery within the great fortress. The first tomb is that of Nestor, who chronicled the ecclesiastical history of this period. The pilgrims kissed the exposed hands of the long-dead monks, whose bodies and faces were shrouded in silk. They peered into the small openings of the cells where the most pious of the brothers lived their span with no light but a candle and no air but the draught which carried down the long black aisle leading from the outer world. Every other day their food was placed before the aperture. The death of a monk was announced to the attendant by the fact that the previous two days' dole of bread and water remained untouched at his final coming. The hole was then bricked up and the cell of the living became the tomb of the dead.

From one shrivelled recluse to another the pilgrims passed, making their devotions with scrupulous zeal. At the end of the catacombs they knelt in veneration of St.



HOTEL BRISTOL, WARSAW

Anthony who first immured himself in this underground chamber of sacrifice. The bodies of other monks lie in recesses further down the hill, but they are less highly revered.

The odour of unwashed clothing grew oppressive and we turned back to the sunshine, which pained our expanded pupils. Long-haired monks were selling sacred trinkets; peasants were passing dutifully from one shrine to the next, and finding their way to the sacristy to stand awestruck before its splendid robes and vessels, which in richness excel even those of the St. Alexander and Trinity Monasteries.

The campanile near the large church is three hundred feet high, the second tallest in Russia, Land of Bells. Three men were ringing the call to service by means of ropes attached, not to the bells themselves, but to the clappers which struck tunefully against the metal sides. The bell-men intone a different measure for each ceremony, and the Orthodox understand the message of the church bells as a soldier knows the bugle's call.

Happy had been left with the luggage in care of a porter at our hotel on the busy Krestiatik, while we spent the night at the monastery. On our return she gave us a flattering welcome, ungraciously deserting the dvornik who had gorged her with goodies. We stopped at the office to inquire for the nearest book-shop, which we found a block away. There we asked to see photographs and post-cards of Kiev. The clerk set out boxes of views for our selection and turned to serve other customers. We had not been in the store ten minutes when figures in the doorway obscured the light, and we looked up to see a gorodovoy turning the key while his companions advanced

and spoke gruffly to the proprietor. He threw out his hands in protestation and looked around at his customers. Instantly I was sure I knew the nature of the policeman's errand. It flashed upon me that word must have come of Román's escape and our complicity. With each hour since we left Sevastopol we had felt less apprehensive as to our danger. Now I realised how foolhardy we had been to linger in the country all these unnecessary days. Here in Kiev we had been overtaken . . . our punishment was about to descend. . . . Phil rose and stood with his hands in his pockets. The voices of the proprietor and the police grew more vehement. As he continued to remonstrate they pushed him aside and came towards us. Phil drew near to me. The men crowded about and began to hunt through the boxes of cards and pictures and to examine, one by one, those we had laid aside. They left one of their number to watch lest we should try to get out the bolted door, while the other six turned their backs to search the book-shelves. The owner and his clerk looked on. Suddenly they started forward as a self-important gendarme discovered a volume behind a row of books and showed its title to those of his inferiors who could read. The customers added their chatter to the tumult of voices. . . . Gradually we came to understand that the invasion of the premises had no connexion with us, but that the unfortunate bookseller had gotten himself into trouble by stocking a forbidden volume.

For an hour or more the searching and the talk continued. Then the door was unlocked. We went into the street, crowded now with an inquisitive populace, and

the proprietor was marched off to the police station. We had to go to another shop to get our pictures.

We asked the hotel clerk if he had heard of the disturbance.

"Oh, yes, I heard of it. They found a copy of a book by the Englishman, Darwin."

"‘The Origin of Species,’ perhaps."

"That was it. My neighbour, Gokchai, must have known that book has been proscribed by the Holy Synod. Now he will be fined a good sum. Perhaps another time he will not be so foolish."

"Why did they look at the pictures?"

"To see if they could find any not permitted to be sold. There are many Poles here. Sometimes a shopkeeper is so rash as to keep in stock cards illustrating Polish insurrections. There is one card especially — it is an allegorical picture of Poland crying on the breast of Christ. But the Poles are so stubborn, they go right on buying it. You are going to Warsaw? You will hear there how stubborn they are."



Chapter XVII

WARSAW AND PARIS: TWO FINALES

THE young woman who shared our compartment during the twenty-four hours' journey to Warsaw was blond and pretty. Her name was Stanisłasa Jaronowska. She had been visiting in Kiev and was on her way home preparatory to entering Cracow University.

"One of our alumni," she told us, "was the astronomer, Nicolaus Koppernigk, who took his first degree in the Polish university."

"Copernicus was a Pole?"

"He was born in Thorn, now a Prussian city. His father was a native of Cracow, also a Polish town at that time. His mother was Barbel Watzelrode. After finishing at Cracow in 1494, he studied astronomy at Bologna, Padua, and Rome. Later he became a canon in the town of Frauenberg, and a physician. Once he was sent as deputy to the diet of the then Polish province of Grodno."

"We pass through Thorn on our way to Paris."

"Then you will see his memorial in the Church of St. John."

We fell to talking in subdued tones of the Poles and her voice shook as she related stories of their wrongs. "Last year, those in power at Petersburg rejected two-thirds of the thirty-six deputies elected to the national дума by Polish Russia, in order to cripple its influence. The nobles, also, who compose the membership of the Na-

tional League of Poland are enemies of the masses for whose liberation they care nothing. They are traitors who barter their country's happiness to obtain privileges which assure them comparative freedom from annoyance. Loyal Poles hate them for their perfidy more than they hate the Russians and the Jews."

"Do the Poles ever intermarry with the Russians?"

"A Pole would as quickly marry a Chinaman as a Russian. If he should so far forget his honour and self-respect as to marry either, he would never allow it to be known."

Above us on an eminence stood the ancient town of Brzsce, called now Brest-Litovsk, which is at the frontier of the former Polish kingdom, once larger than the German Empire of the present time.

It has been owned successively by warring Volhynians, Galicians, Lithuanians, Poles, Tatars, Teutons, Swedes, and Russians. The banks of the Bóg were the site of a settlement here in 1020. After the Polish rebellion of 1831, Russia built a fortress at the junction of the Bóg and the Muskhovets. We crossed the river and dragged on at the rate of twenty miles an hour to Terespol, Biala, Miendzizhets past the estates of the Potockis, the Radziwills and the Tsartoryskis to Siedlce, and so to Warsaw on the river Vistula. We saw Mlle. Jaronowska into a cab and bade her good-bye until the morrow when she was to guide us about her native city. Jerry was not due until the next evening.

We drove in an omnibus over a handsome bridge up a well-lighted street to the portals of one of the best hotels in Europe, the Bristol. The lobby was cheery with basket-chairs, tall clocks, and palms. An Otis elevator

upholstered in blue, carried us to our apartment, which had a private hall leading to a sitting-room and an adjoining bed-chamber. Heavy velvet and lace curtains draped the windows, and pink-shaded electric reading-lamps depended above a mahogany writing-table, and stood on the stands by each brass bed. The really luxurious suite was no more expensive than an uncongenial room in an average American hotel.

Philip lounged on the divan while I wrote tardy letters during the evening, dating them "The Warsaw of Thaddeus." Directly opposite was a newspaper office where the night editor, the reporters, the printers, the office "devils" were rushing back and forth preparing the next day's *Kuryer* like newspapermen the world over at the same hour of night. A cabful of rioters went by under our windows. Well-dressed men and women arrived after the theatre for supper in the Bristol café. Apparently, the current of life here did not differ from that of any cosmopolitan city. But in dungeons under the river-bank, we knew there were scores of guiltless prisoners waiting eternally for trial. A hundred thousand Russian soldiers are quartered in and near Warsaw, a city of a million inhabitants. Beneath the crust of everyday existence there is a seething fire of discontent. The Poles were ever a restless race, excitable, ambitious, visionary. Their subjection to a nation inferior in culture and antecedents is all the more galling.

Mlle. Jaronowska came the next morning with her hands full of roses. In a pale grey gown and hat, she looked as sweet as one of her own blossoms. Her yellow hair was coiled in a knob at either temple, a quaint

coiffure which suited her unusual type. Her manner was a little diffident, but none the less winsome for that.

The shops of Warsaw are less interesting than those of Moscow, but the buildings are quite surprisingly large and fine. We stopped on the great square in the centre of the city to buy tickets for the evening performance at one of the two Government theatres which flank the Opera House. Then we went slowly through the old market-place, past the odd houses of ancient Warsaw to the narrow street where the thirteenth century cathedral stands. Memorials to Polish kings are its chief treasures. There is a tablet to the last sovereign, Poniatowski, on the wall near the door. His descendant, Prince Poniatowski of Paris, married a Miss Sperry of San Francisco.

We lunched at a garden retreat not far from the new blue-roofed, café au lait Greek Orthodox church, at which the Poles scoff as poor art. The library building was desolated of its three hundred thousand volumes by the Russians who carried them off to Petersburg in 1794 and built on this magnificent foundation the Imperial Library of the new capital. On the façade of the empty Warsaw edifice is a stone frieze showing bas relief medallions of all the Polish kings.

"Can you not imagine our rage when we look at this vacant building which once held the most extensive library in Europe?" said the little Polonaise. "Our archives have been removed from the Carmelite church to Petersburg. Our churches have, many of them, been suppressed. The university is closed because we refuse to forsake our own tongue to study in the despised Russian.

Our most intimate feelings are outraged. It is insufferable that we should be under subjection to a conqueror with practically no civilisation. For centuries the Polani have boasted culture and refinement. In the early ages they were less savage than others of the Slavi. I cannot begin to enumerate the ways in which we are persecuted — the ingeniously cruel methods by which we are humbled, bitterly, helplessly humbled!" Her gentian-blue eyes filled with tears. "After the rebellion of '31 the citizens of Warsaw were forced to subscribe for the building of the citadel, knowing it would be used against them in any future insurrection. We cannot lift our voices against Russians individually or as a nation without hazarding imprisonment. Poles filling civil positions are sent to distant posts: they are not permitted to serve in Polish Russia. We are slaves, not subjects. We have no rights. We are mocked and assailed." Her lips trembled as she clenched her hands. In her, we saw the impersonation of quivering Poland.

We drove in the shade of the lime-trees out the Champs Elysées, bordered by mansions set in greenery, and by Botanical Gardens and Public Parks. At the end of the long avenue we turned into a wood where Cossacks stood guard to preserve the Tsar's domain, a palace set on a high terrace, with an enormous royal monogram planted in begonias.

We proceeded to the fairy woods and pools of the Lazienki Palace, built by King Stanislas Poniatowski. Such old-world romance breathed from each leaf and was reflected in every ripple of artificial water, that we felt like animated Watteau figures as we sauntered past the stone amphitheatre, where royalty once applauded Thes-

pians acting bits of farce on an al fresco stage across a stream; and wandered down by-ways once trodden by princesses and their lovers or haunted by courtiers planning intrigues. To dress the part, we women should have worn puffed sleeves and quilted skirts, while Philip, in wig, breeches and buckled shoes, leaned to whisper nothings as we smirked behind pink fans.

The esplanade of the square palace is edged with orange trees and lapped by the silent pool. Our cicerone knew no English, and I was glad; French seemed vastly more in keeping with the picture.

We took her back to the Bristol for dinner, stopping on the way to see the church erected in memory of Alexander II, who, following the Poles' rebellion of 1863, was regarded as their friend. It faces a square which was the scene of the fiercest struggle of the futile insurrection. Near the hotel was the Thorwaldsen statue of Copernicus, which stands in another square before a building which once housed the suppressed Society of the Friends of Science, but is now a Russian school building. Close by we entered the Church of the Holy Cross to see a tablet dedicated to Chopin.

We had left word at the hotel for Jerry that we would return by six o'clock. When we alighted, there was his hand extended to greet us. How glad we were to see the boy! As for him, he was, of course, jubilant as befitted one who hoped soon to be a bridegroom.

We were a merry dinner company. The orchestra was superlatively good; a fountain splashed in the court which was overhung by window-boxes.

"Of course you know who is your landlord?"

"No, who?"

"M. Ignace Paderewski." The Mademoiselle and Jerry smiled at our expression. Such commercial astuteness was rather overpowering to us, remembering poetic locks, and dreamy touch of slim pale hands. But certainly it was a delightful monument to raise to American appreciation of the pianist's art!

"The father of the Reszke brothers was once proprietor of the Hotel Saski in Warsaw," added the Polish girl. She told us, too, that M. Edward had been married by civil authorities and had some time before petitioned the Tsar to recognise the union as legal, but that the result was not known. He has three daughters, one of whom is an actress.

For twelve of our United States cents a cab carried us to the Théâtre Variété. The curtain was already up on an act from "The Geisha" translated into Polish—rather an uncanny effect. There followed scenes from two German light operas and the usual variegated programme presenting a Danish tenor, an Austrian soubrette, a Bulgarian dancing duo, a witty Polish monologist, and a ballet which was still whirling and marching when we left the theatre.

We drove our little Polonaise to her door, parting with mutual congratulations that a Polish-American alliance had so happily been formed. Then we went back to our rooms for a bite of supper and a chat with Jerry.

"Do you know," he said, "I discovered after you left Petersburg why you were so closely watched there and finally arrested."

"We were arrested because we photographed the navy yard; what other reason could there have been?"

"Just the question Prince K. asked the chief that

night. He answered that Phil's connexion with the Consolidated Steel was known to the Russian Consulate in London where you had your passport viséd. They cabled Secret Service headquarters that you might be coming to Petersburg to get information about a new steel process the navy has been trying out. One of their spies — that cabman — overheard something Joyce said in the Peter the Great church which confirmed in them the idea that you were perhaps spies for the United States Government, especially as you had been seen going about London with our naval attaché."

"Why, we had a letter to him! Steel manufacture was never mentioned."

"Which has little to do with the case. The dominating trait of the Russian is suspicion. There were fifteen thousand suspected persons sent out of the capital last year. They imagine, especially in the country, that strangers are political or religious spies. You were in luck not to have had any further trouble during your jaunts."

"Someday, we'll tell you a story, Gerard, my boy . . . not here . . . not now," as he looked expectant, "but sometime when we meet outside the Tsar's dominions. We don't know the climax yet, but we shall soon. . . . Have you seen Mlle. Marie lately?"

"Oh, by Jove! I had forgotten to tell you, and now that I've remembered — I hate to. I know how sorry you'll be. She was taken with her friend for spreading revolutionary propaganda near Vitebsk. They are in gaol there, and no one knows when they'll get out. Of course their fathers' position may save them. Chin, or rank, is almost everything in Russia. Still, the offence is very

grave from the Government's viewpoint. All her friends are much worried."

"Our little Marie! It can't be possible they will deport her!"

"I am afraid it is quite possible. At any rate she'll be held in an awful provincial prison for weeks. That's bad enough."

I was reminded of the story of the Kharkov student.

"And the worst of it is that such experiences are not at all unusual," he replied. "The Government expends its venom against just that class, the 'intelligentsia,' the only really worthy stratum of Russian society."

"What about Marie's fiancé?" inquired Phil. "They were to be married soon, she said."

Jerry smoked his cigar in short puffs, staring out the window a moment before he answered: "I don't suppose you'll believe it. He seemed like a decent fellow to me, and tremendously in love . . . but he has broken the engagement on the ground that his sweetheart is — a traitor. Of course he knew nothing of her revolutionary ideas. It was rather a shock to him."

"The presumptuous cad!"

"He thinks he is proving his loyalty to his Emperor."

I was too moved to speak. Marie in prison, and jilted by the one she loved! Little dark-eyed Marie! I recalled her adorably shy expression in the Nevsky shop when she had told me of her wedding plans. Before going to bed, I wrote her a letter, addressed to the Vitebsk prison. When we were out of Russia I mailed it, though I could not be sure that it would ever reach her.

Early the next morning we went to meet Mrs. Hazard and Cicely. Of course they had no inkling of our pres-



ŁAZIENKI PALACE, WARSAW



ence in Warsaw. We stood back until Jerry had welcomed them; then stepped from behind a post. The joyous little shrieks which followed attracted the amused glances of the crowd as Cicely flung herself upon me, and we embraced and kissed and embraced again. Her betrothed looked on jealously. We left her to him for the return drive while we took Mrs. Hazard in with us. Arrived at the hotel, Philip left us to order a luncheon suitable to the occasion, while we went up to the suite Jerry had engaged for his guests. It was a half-hour before Cicely came with a radiant Jerry behind her. He nodded meaningly at me, and drew me to the window while the daughter pleaded of the mother with flushed cheeks, and downcast eyes. "She will," he whispered. "Now for her mater's consent!"

"Don't worry, she couldn't resist so ardent a would-be son-in-law." And I was right.

"Well, children —" said the little woman, rising with Cicely's hand in hers.

Jerry crossed to meet them, kissing Cicely and then Mrs. Hazard, as he said manfully, "I can't thank you enough. I've been so lonely without her. You must come with us though."

"No, Jerry boy, you're good to ask it, but I was once a bride — I know!" She laughed a wise mother-laugh. "My sister is in Vienna. She'll be delighted to have company. Perhaps during the winter, we'll come to visit my daughter, Mrs. Drake." She smiled up at the big fellow, with his arm around his brown-haired sweetheart. "I only wish Cicely's father could have lived to know his daughter's happiness." She put her handkerchief quickly to her eyes.

"Now, motherkin, if you are going to cry I shan't leave you a minute."

"But I am not — when is it to be?"

"This afternoon," I responded promptly. "We must hurry on to Paris, and Jerry has already engaged us as wedding attendants."

"Before I said I would marry him to-day!" Cicely pinched his arm.

"He knew you couldn't refuse anyone so deserving," Phil had returned from below. "Why, even the minister is partly ordered. You'll have to be married in German for the only available Protestant minister is a Lutheran. We telephoned him last night to pre-empt his services."

To which Cicely retorted roguishly: "Jerry could hardly have had a better tutor to instruct him in 'How to Marry in Haste.'"

"And 're-Joyce' at leisure? Come, jená, three is company, five's a crowd. Leave the Drake with his little duck."

"Mother Goose will withdraw also," laughed Mrs. Hazard, turning to the door of her bedroom. "I must unpack a wedding-gown for my daughter."

Mademoiselle Jaronowska had recommended some late Polish songs, so we went shopping for them and for a wedding-present. Remembering our bride's penchant for antiques, we forswore the smart shops of the Theatre Square for a row of mediæval buildings not far from the statue of Mieczkiewicz, the Polish Puschkin. We found in a curiosity shop a bracelet of gold scroll-work which bore in Polish a legend set in tiny blue stones. The proprietor translated the sentiment for us, and we repeated it to Cicely as we clasped the band about her wrist: "How much the wife is dearer than the bride." She wore

Jerry's pearl necklet around the collar of her white dress, and in her hair was a spray of camellia buds. Her bouquet of camellias and white roses lay at her hand as we ate the wedding luncheon served in the Hazard's sitting-room. Like our own, it preceded the nuptials.

Before we were quite done, the minister came. Suddenly grave, we left our feasting and stood quietly while he read the service, and pronounced the words which made the two one. "To think you should be here to see me married in Warsaw!" whispered Cicely, as she laid her cheek to mine.

The waiter came with the ices and the pastry. We pressed the kindly pastor to sit with us, but he excused himself in his best manner, as Jerry followed him to the elevator to slip something into his hand.

Until train-time we lingered at the bridal board. "Where are you going on your tour d'amour?" Philip wanted to know.

"To the most romantic town in Europe."

"Which is?"

"Old Cracow, or Cracovie, over the border."

"The Galician city Mlle. Jaronowska described as so captivating. It is still the Mecca of the Poles, even though it is owned now by Austria. I envy you."

"Come too . . ."

"We would if —"

Philip, rousing from a moment's abstraction, warned me with a glance, as he stood up, glass in hand. "Lady and gentleman! In New York Town I chose my mate, in Warsaw saw you marry. Now you are off to Cracovie, while we go on to Paree. Long live the young Drakes!"

"And the young Houghtons!"

“And Madame —”

“A Hazard happily negotiated!”

When we went downstairs we found the frolicsome pair had tied white ribbons on *our* trunks, and at the Berlin-Warsaw dépôt they waggishly flung rice and rose petals, thus deceitfully proclaiming us as the newest bride and groom. They laughed at our impotence while our fellow-travellers smiled knowingly, as a handful of rice snapped on the car window. “Wait till you come to London!” menaced Philip, putting out his head.

“A pleasant honeymoon! Can you catch?” twitted Cicely, throwing him a flower which he fastened in Happy’s collar.

“Just you wait, you scamps!” I repeated, as the train pulled out.

A passenger on the seat opposite was relating to a young man who sat beside him an incident which had occurred during the day at his factory. Two of his men had been shot for suspected treason to the Polish Revolutionists. Their bodies had been removed and the work had gone on as usual. “If I had shown any sympathy, I should probably have been killed, too.”

“What are we coming to?”

“The commercial situation is almost as bad as the political. But, of course, it is much worse in Russia proper.”

“The Russian workman is a spoiled agriculturist.”

“In summer lots of factories have to close for lack of employés. During good harvests especially, the mills can’t operate, though it is just those years when the output is less that the muzhiks have more money to spend. . . .”

“And so it goes to buy foreign goods even more ex-

pensive than the home product, because of the high duty."

"A good harvest makes little difference. The more money the people have, the more back taxes they must pay. They can never rise above a certain plane of poverty no matter how they try."

"If they could pay their taxes in grain it would help, but the Government demands ready money, so the farmers have to sell to dishonest middlemen for what they can get. By the time they have saved a fourth of their crop for next year's sowing, there is little enough left them to eat. With the muzhik it is:

"The sheep I tend another owns;
He takes the flesh and I, the bones.
The wool a million shuttles bear
Weaves not for me a coat to wear."

"Fortunately for Poland, our people care more for manufacturing than for agriculture. See how Lodz has thriven even in this oppressed country." The speaker pushed back the door and looked out. "One can't tell who might be listening."

"I am glad to be getting away."

"Where do you go?"

"To business school in Antwerp. My sister has already left for Zürich. We Poles can't get an education in our own country any more."

"I know it. My daughter was forbidden to open her private school at Plotsk where I live. Last year she taught the children a little Polish history and it was reported to the police."

"I wonder why there are so many soldiers on guard at the stations."

"The bandits are at it again, robbing and killing."

"Well, at least there is a chance that highwaymen will be caught and punished. That's more than one can hope for official thieves."

An array of German and Russian gendarmes came aboard the train at Alexandrowo to examine baggage, passports, and permits to leave the country. For the latter, we paid forty-five cents. The customs' stamps were affixed. At the last moment our passport was returned. We exchanged our Russian train crew for German; the train flew ahead at a faster rate and crossed the little river which marks the frontier. . . . Gigantic, gorgeous, groaning Russia lay behind us.

We spent the night at Thorn, the first Prussian town over the border. We passed another Thorwaldsen Copernican memorial on our way to the old Cathedral of St. John. A wall tablet shows a painting of the astronomer and below it the inscription in old Latin:

Nicolao Copernico Toruniensi absolutae subtilitatis mathematicone tanti viri aoud exteros celeber: In sua patria periret memoria hoc monume: positu: mor: warmiae in suo canonicatu 1543. Aeta LXXIII.

Quem cernis vivo retinet Copernicus ore cui decus eximium forma perfecit imago os rubeum pulchrique oculi pulchrique capilli cultaque appelleas imitantia membra figuras illum scrutanti similem similimque docenti aspiceres qualis fuerat cum sydera jussit et caelum constare loco terramque rotar finxit et in medio mundi tytana locavit D. O. M. Atque in ampliorem tanti viri gloriam ortulit et dedicavit idem qui restauravit.

Underneath, stands a bust set on a marble pedestal erected in 1766.

About noon of the next day we were at the door of the

little Hôtel du Rhône, on the rue Jean Jacques Rousseau which ends in the square behind the Magasin du Louvre.

"I am almost afraid to enter."

"So am I. Wait a moment." That word "supposing"—how it tantalised!

A servant came towards us. "Will you ask, please, if there is someone here, a Russian called Petrovsky?" Philip spelled the name. The man went to find the concierge, who came out of her little room on the left.

"No, Monsieur, we have no guest called Petrovsky."

"Nor one named Marilov, a lady?" She shook her head. We gazed in despair. Neither had come . . . Petrovsky had been taken before he left the steamer. . . . And Liuba? Had the telegram been intercepted—was she still waiting at Shulov? "You are sure there are no Russians here?"

"Pardon, Madame, I said only there was no Russian named Petrovsky."

"Then there are some others?" as our spirits rose.

"There is a gentleman; he has just gone up to his room. Charles, ask the lodger in room 29 if he will have the kindness to descend." Phil handed the porter his card. We waited . . . we heard steps . . . the guest in number 29 was coming along the upper hall. Phil started half-way up the stairs, but it was not Petrovsky who faced him. "I—I beg pardon—"

"He is not the gentleman you wished to see?" queried the concierge.

"No, but if he is a Russian perhaps he could tell us—"

"Ah, I have thought—there is another. He has a wife—such a pretty young woman with so charming a smile. . . . Run, Charles, look in the reading-room. . . .

No? They are not there . . . then, perhaps —” She looked at the clock. “One o’clock less twenty-five minutes. I know! They would be at the *déjeuner á la fourchette*.”

“Where is the dining-room?”

“There to the right, Monsieur.” I followed my husband, with my heart beating faster at every step. We opened the door. At the end of the room sat the exile and his bride. We stole towards them. Petrovsky raised his eyes. “Liuba,” he said with joyous emphasis, “our friends — they have come!”

The waiter ran for two more covers. Over the lunch-table we heard their story. Liuba had left under pretext of being summoned to supervise some work. Román’s path had been unobstructed. When he arrived at the hotel of M. Couturat, their trysting-place, his fiancée was already here to meet and marry him. “Can you conceive our happiness?” she asked.

“But you don’t know how anxious we were when no despatch came to Sevastopol.”

“I did not dare send one,” said our friend. “On the quay at Constantinople was a detective I knew well. If he had seen me, he would have watched my movements. A message from me would have implicated the one addressed.”

“Then the maid said there was no one here named Petrovsky, and we had another fright!”

Román turned to his wife with a smile. “Let me introduce to you Madame Namor. At first we did not dare announce ourselves rightly for Michael’s sake. I explained to the proprietor. But we need fear no more for Michael.”

"You don't mean that he is —?"

"We have had a letter."

"From Michael himself? Is he safe?" We were afraid to hear his answer.

"Yes, from Michael. He is in Posen with his mother."

This was good news indeed. "What was his plan? How did he accomplish it?" we besieged in one breath.

Petrovsky drew an envelope from his pocket. "You shall hear the letter. We will translate it for you." Liuba leaned close to look over his shoulder, her glowing face near his as he read in a voice now strong and full of life:

"MY DEAR COMRADE:

At the moment I write you I sit by a window facing the cathedral at Posen. Last night I arrived here. I came to the door of my aunt's house. It was my mother who admitted me. How close I held her while she wept in my arms! With her, you are saying, 'How did it come to pass? Tell me quickly!' For she knew no more than you what I had in my mind when I kept repeating 'I know a way.' So then, I will tell over again the story I told her. This much you know: my father deserted us before I was born. We never knew what became of him. My mother supported me with her needle until I was old enough to earn for both. The rest of the story I had kept to myself since the day of the pogrom of the Jews, six weeks ago, when the new ispravnik came to Arminsk. He had sent to the shop for some migraine pills which I carried to his room in the traktir. I knocked. No one answered. I opened the door. . . . The ispravnik was lying on the bed asleep. Across his cheek was a white scar, and the little finger of the hand which hung by his side was gone. I drew closer and stared down at him. I saw that he was not above middle height, that he had a large cruel mouth, that his cheek-bones were high, and that his hair grew low on his forehead. Softly I laid the box of pills on the stand, and as I did so, I saw a letter among a lot of papers. It was addressed to Ivan Kirsanov. For a moment I stood looking at him and wondering what I should do. My father! And I despised him more than any one living! He stirred. I crept towards him as

though I would strangle him. Then I thought better of it and went downstairs, where I said to the kupets, 'The ispravnik is asleep.'

'He has a headache. I will pay for the medicine. Forty kopeks? Better charge him more.' He laughed.

'That is the price. Why should we ask him more?'

'Because he is rich. He can pay anything.'

'Rich from bribes.'

'I suppose so.'

'Well, forty kopeks is the price of the pills. We will not charge him more. Perhaps I shall have another account to settle with him some other day.' As a little boy I had never tired asking my mother how he looked; often she had described him. He was poor then. Now he was rich and a man of authority in the district. I said nothing. I wanted to plan how to force him to make recompense. We had moved from the town where I was born. Of course he knew nothing of our living in Arminsk.

The afternoon I determined you should take my passport, the thought came to me that through him I should perhaps be able to escape, when you had gone. Since I first saw him I had heard that he was married again, and had a son in the Technical School at Moscow. An ispravnik is a great man, oh, yes! But even an ispravnik would not find it to his advantage to have it proven that he had living two wives! When my mother left for Prussia I gave her a letter to mail to the chief of the District Police. I had written and rewritten it. But I had said nothing to her of its contents. She had promised to trust me and ask no questions. Little did she guess that she was posting a letter from her son to his father!

Two days later I looked through the curtain and saw him coming down the street. I took my revolver from the drawer and went to meet him. He entered, looking at me with a sneer. I was not frightened. He had everything to lose—position, reputation, advancement in the future. The fact that he had come as I demanded proved his fear of my disclosures.

I let him go ahead as we went upstairs. 'Now what is it?' he asked, as I closed the door.

'You are my father.'

'So your letter said.'

'You do not deny it. Throughout my life you have neglected my mother,—your wife.'

'What proof have you that she is my wife?'



MEMORIAL TO COPERNICUS, ST. JOHN'S
CATHEDRAL, THORN



'Your own consciousness is the best proof—besides, I have living evidence.'

'What if I killed you—here—now—' He took a step towards me.

'Were you able to kill me, your exposure would still be inevitable. . . . I have given my mother a letter to open if she does not hear from me in a certain time. Whether I am alive or dead, the world will know what you have done, unless you do as I demand.'

'What do you want,' he said harshly, his evil eyes fixed upon me, 'money?'

'Your foul rubles? I want only safe conveyance out of the country. I have liberated an exile by giving him my passport. It will be discovered that he is gone. I shall be shot for connivance at a prisoner's escape. You must help me get over the line. As soon as it is dark to-night I will go to the forest. You will meet me alone and drive me to Tornak, bringing me a fictitious passport, properly stamped.'

'It is impossible.'

'Nothing is impossible for an ispravnik in his own district.'

'When the uriadnik finds the exile gone, he will suspect I helped him.'

'You are the pristav's close friend. Nothing can harm you.' Still he hesitated. 'Perhaps you would prefer to have it announced that you are a bigamist.'

He glared at me. 'And if I give you this passport how am I to know you will not still—'

'Betray you? I have nothing to gain from exposing you when I am once free. It is only your protection that is valuable to me. When I have no more need of that—I shall forget you.'

His face softened. 'You will not remember me, your father?'

I laughed. 'Did you recall that I was your son once during my life-time?'

'I did not quite forget. One night I came back and looked in the window and saw your mother holding you on her knee, but I—I had gone away because I thought I—loved another woman. I was ashamed to face your mother after I found—'

'So you left us perhaps to starve.'

'Well—Michael, I want to do something for you now.'

'Get me a passport.'

'I'll—See here, Michael, I'll send you to school. It's not too late.

You shall have an education like—my other son. We'll make a chemist of you. You say you've worked in the apothecary's shop here. You shall learn to be a chemist, or anything you will. I am glad you sent for me, Michael. It's only fair that you should have a chance, too. Come, what do you say? What do you want me to do for you?'

'Get me a passport.' I felt as if I should strike him, mocking me at this late day with offers of an education so bitterly longed for. 'Get me a passport so I can go to my mother. That is all I want of you.' He put his hand on my arm, but I shook him off and backed against the wall. 'Get me a passport, do you hear? Bring me a passport to-night and I'll trouble you no more.'

'Yes, yes, I'll get you a passport, but I—You're a fine big fellow, Michael; I want to do something for you besides.'

'There is nothing else you can do for me. Your remorse comes too late. For years, we have suffered and struggled—struggled and suffered. You gave us no thought. Now—all I ask is my freedom. I need nothing more from you. And rather than accept the favours you speak of, I would forego my freedom.'

He looked at me almost sadly, and yet I loathed him. He drew nearer and I shrank from his touch. He opened his wallet. 'Well then—' he said slowly, fingering the bills, 'you are going to see your mother. I should like to send her—'

'Not money. She would not touch it.' But he took out some hundred-ruble notes and tried to force them upon me. At that I lost my control. 'You leave my mother on the eve of my birth. She fights single-handed against poverty while you grow rich on extortion, marry another, and bring up her children in ease. After twenty-four years you come here under duress, and moved by some maudlin sentiment offer us money to satisfy your shred of a conscience. . . . Give it to me—I will show you what I will do with your money!' I snatched the notes from his loosened fingers and tore them to bits before he could restrain me. The pieces fell to the floor. The *ispravnik* trembled and put out his hand.

'Michael, my son . . . ' he quavered. But I opened the door of the bedroom. 'To-night—at nine o'clock—in the forest!' He stumbled like an old man as he went down the stairs and let himself out.

The train left Tornak at midnight. It was the *ispravnik* of the District of—who saw me safely on my way out of Russia—forever.

Here in Posen I shall soon find work. There will be no more massacres, no more midnight searches, no more spying, no more spectres of imprisonment and exile. In this Prussian-Polish city, affairs are honestly administered. The Poles are discontented, but when were they ever otherwise? Here one breathes air untainted by scandal and intrigue. I should like to see Russia's filth swept clean by German brooms! Many times I have thought of what you said that night at Arminsk—'Russia's salvation must come from without.' Preach that text, my Román; write it unceasingly; instil it into the teachings of your comrades abroad. When Russia's millions are liberated, your name will be among those called the pioneers of her freedom.

Often we speak of you, of the one who is by now your wife, of the Gospodin Houghton, and the Sudarynya. We salute you all with affection.

MICHAEL."





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